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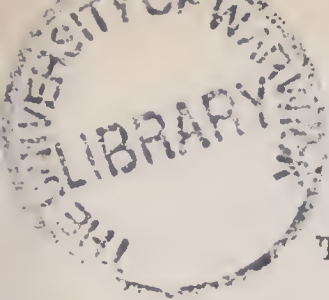
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Ladies, Villagers, &c.

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THE THREE MUSKETEERS.

Synopsis of Scenery, Incidents, &c.

ACT FIRST.

The "Jolly Miller" Inn and Pleasure Grounds.

Grand Fête and Pas de Vignerons.—Arrival of the Cardinal's Emissaries, and their rencontre with the Adventurer, who is robbed of his credentials.—D'Artagnan's bruise is healed and his heart endangered.—Loss of a letter and a love.—Pursuit of the Robber.

De Treville's House in Paris.

The Musketeers and their hobbies.—A triple challenge.—Interview between the Recruit and his Commander.—First act of disobedience and a race for revenge.

The Queen's Boudoir.

A lover in the closet and a traitress in the camp.—The fatal gift.—The Cardinal insults the Queen.—Plot between the false friend and avowed enemy.—Richelieu excites the King's jealousy, and prepares a scheme for the Queen's disgrace.—Plot and Counterplot.
"Who wins?"

ACT SECOND.

Exterior of the Fort St. Leon.

Arrival of the Duellists.—More principals than seconds.—Three to one against the Adventurer.—Sudden turn in affairs.—The foes become friends: "One for all and all for one."

D'Artagnan's Lodgings.

An old man's troubles and a young wife's grief.—Story of the wounded Musketeer.—The Cardinal outwitted, and capture of the enemy's baggage.

Sally-Port at Calais.

Lady de Winter's perilous voyage.—The adventurer on his mission.—D'Artagnan borrows a good word of a friend.—Pursuit and the Adventurer's escape.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS.

As performed at Manchester, August 2nd, 1850.

Characters.

KING LOUIS XIII. OF FRANCE.....	MR. G. PRESTON.
CARDINAL RICHELIEU	MR. G. MAYNARD.
GEORGE VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCK- INGHAM	MR. ROSIER.
COUNT DE ROCHEFORT (<i>an Emissary of Cardinal Richelieu's</i>)	MR. J. WEBB.
DE TREVILLE (<i>Captain of the King's Musketeers</i>)	MR. HODNET.
ATHOS } (<i>three Soldiers of the Musketeer</i> PORTHIOS } (<i>Guard</i>)	{ MR. F. B. EGAN. MR. MYERS. MR. REEVE.
ARAMIS }	
D'ARTAGNAN (<i>an Adventurer</i>)	MR. C. DILLON.
BONIFACE (<i>a Spy of Richelieu's and Hus- band of Constance</i>)	MR. GAY.
POUCHET (<i>Host of the "Jolly Miller"</i>) ...	MR. WARLOW.
LE TOUR (<i>Lieutenant of Bombardiers</i>).....	MR. MORGAN.
SEADRIFT (<i>Captain of the "True Briton"</i>)	MR. GARLAND.
JACQUES (<i>a Waiter</i>).....	MR. J. COURTLEY.
COURIER.....	MR. WELLS.

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LADY DE WINTER (<i>an Agent of Richelieu's</i>)	MISS MORTIMER.
CONSTANCE (<i>the Queen's 'Tire Woman—a Fondling</i>).....	MISS A. HARCOURT.

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THE THREE MUSKETEERS.

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THE THREE MUSKETEERS.

ACT THIRD.

Cabin of the "True Briton."

The Duke is troubled with an unexpected companion.—The betrayer and the betrayed.—Another intruder.—The plot works.—Abstraction of the diamond studs.—The Adventurer discovers the Foundling's father.—Another revelation.—The Duke in a dilemma.—A friend in need.—D'Artagnan's dive.

Parlour of the "Jolly Miller"

Return of a suspicious guest, who encounters more suspicious companions.—Christening of the cards.—The gambler loses his gold and jeopardises his honour.—Lucky discovery and one hope left.

Street in Paris.

The place of meeting and the hour.—Constance is caught in a trap.—The Musketeers find employment.—Rescue of the Queen's confidante.—Madam Boniface made a widow.

Chamber in the Hotel Grammont.

Athos, the Musketeer's warning.—One effort more.—D'Artagnan makes another discovery.—A good soldier but a bad pleader.—He gains the prize.—Alarm of the Guards.—Pursuit.—"Fire."—The Adventurer falls.—Fearful encounter of the Noble and his wronger.—A vain appeal.—"Mercy."—None.—Appalling revenge of Lady de Winter.

Ante Room in the Palace.

The summons to the Ball.—The Queen's failure and her despair.—Richelieu triumphant.

Saloon—The State Ball.

The festivities interrupted.—Arrival of an uninvited guest.—The Cardinal's accusation of the Queen.—His evidence.—The plot thickens.—Dreadful dilemma and the King's threat.—Counter evidence.—Anne of Austria's secret friend.—Recognition of the Murderess.—Her child's appeal for mercy.—The cards come round.—Ten to two.—A Queen against a Knave.—Punishment of the Conspirators.—Reconciliation of the King and Queen.—Triumph of the Musketeers.

J. O. Case

THE
THREE MUSKETEERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Exterior of the Jolly Miller Inn. The Inn is raised on a terrace, about three feet above the ground, L. U. E.; a door leads into the house from R. side of it, and facing the Audience is a French window opening on to the terrace, through which is seen the interior. Beyond the house a picturesque landscape and distant village. Benches and tables with fruit and wine, R. and L. of Stage.*

As curtain rises a fête is in progress, MALE and FEMALE PEASANTS are dancing a Pas des Vignerons, towards the conclusion of which COUNT ROCHEFORT enters, R. 1 E., followed by two GENTLEMEN. The PEASANTS nearest him cease dancing, the others then observe him and retire from the dance, except one, MANETTE, who carried away by her excitement seizes ROCHEFORT, instead of her late partner. She instantly sees her mistake and withdraws in confusion, her companions laughing at her.

ROCHE. Nay, blush not, my little brunette; 'tis I that am to blame for marring your amusement. Friends, proceed with your dance. Host! (POUCHET advances) Has an English lady arrived here within the last hour?

POU. (bowing, L.) No, your excellency; nor have we had a distinguished visitor either French or English, for the last month until your excellency's arrival.

ROCHE. The lady I speak of will no doubt be here shortly. I await her in your house.

POU. The best room of which is but too much honoured by your excellency's presence.

ROCHE. Pshaw! Folly! (to PEASANTS) Pursue your merry-making, I may at least be a witness if not a partaker. Host, take this, (takes money from purse) and let our honest neighbours have some refreshment.

Exit, bowed into the inn by POUCHET, followed by the two GENTLEMEN. The PEASANTS all salute him as he retires, then prepare to resume the dance, POUCHET returns and advances, c., all gather round him.

POU. A great man! Must be! Five louis-d'ors is too much to spend at once amongst such weak heads. (aside)

JACQUES. What a glorious-looking gentleman!

MANETTE. And I embraced him! How he did startle me.

JACQUES. Reserve your embraces for me for the future, or I shall be startled too.

MAN. I'm sure he has left something handsome for us.

JACQUES. How much, Pouchet?

POU. What think you of five francs?

MAN. Five francs? That's none so much!

POU. (*aside*) Greedy wretches! (*aloud*) But what think you of ten francs?

JACQUES. Ten francs? Huzza!

POU. What think you of a louis-d'or?

JACQUES. Huzza! A cheer for his Excellency!

ROCHEFORT and two GENTLEMEN appear at the window and sit within the room, a WAITER places wine on table, throws open windows and exits. While this is passing all the PEASANTS are cheering around POUCHET, and then go up stage.

POU. A louis-d'or! 'twas almost too much, but I'll give them short measure for it.

Exit into house.

JACQUES. Who'll dance? His Excellency ought to have something for his money; come, partners. You and I, Manette, together. He may be struck, and give us money enough to marry. (*as they are about to recommence* POUCHET rushes out of house laughing vociferously)

POU. Ho, ho, ho! Stop your dancing! Ho, ho, ho! Here's another visitor, I saw him coming round to the yard from the Calais Road!

JACQUES. On a horse?

POU. A horse! Such an animal as eyes ne'er beheld before!

JACQUES. Another nobleman? Another Excellency?

POU. Not an Excellency; an execrable! No prince unless the Prince of Poverty, and heir apparent to old apparel. But see! here comes his High Mouldiness, mounted on a mare ten years older than himself.

D'ARTAGNAN (*without*, R. 1 E.) Ho, there! hostler! Host! your hand here! quick!

POU. (*concealing his laughter*) Coming, your mightiness. (*all laugh*) Hush! keep your tongues quiet for awhile; his Excellency shall have five minutes' sport from this youth.

JACQUES. But see, he carries a sword.

POU. Aye, so his horse carries him that can hardly carry itself.

D'ART. (*outside*) Odds! must my horse stand here untended?

Enters, R.

Sirrah, host!—Are you he?

POU. (*bowing obsequiously*) At your Excellency's command.

D'ART. (*aside*) Excellency! That makes amends.

POU. In what way can I have the honour of serving your Excellency?

D'ART. Good fellow! look to my horse.

POU. Assuredly, your horse shall be fed——

D'ART. I sleep here to-night.

POU. In the stable.

D'ART. Hey! (*turning sharply on him*) The stable?

POU. Your horse?

D'ART. Ah, true! Bring me some wine. (*sits at unoccupied table, R.; POUCHET touches him entreatingly, and leads him from table; then runs to seat and dusts it very carefully, then places it with great ceremony for him. D'ARTAGNAN looks at him suspiciously; puts his hand to his sword; but on reflection, with a gesture of contempt at POUCHET, orders*) A bottle of your best Burgundy.

POU. Your Exeellency, I am out of Burgundy.

D'ART. Rhenish.

POU. Your Highness, we have no Rhenish.

D'ART. *Purbleu!* Claret, then.

POU. Your Worship, we are always paid for claret before 'tis drawn.

D'ART. (*starting*) What? But stay, it may be the custom, and I have much to learn. There, (*gives gold coin*) and quick with your wine.

POU. Your Mightiness shall be obeyed.

Exit, smothering a laugh.

D'ART. Am I mocked by that fellow? Bah! he is but a boor, and knows no better! What can we look for in such beings? no name, no fame, no ambition, no aneestry. Aneestry! well I confess I am proud there, and 'tis nearly all I have to be proud of. My father, when I left my home yesterday, gave me this sword, (*affectionately to it*) old Bobbadillo, as my companion, and this advice for my guide: "Honor the King, obey Monsieur de Treville, and never refuse to fight." My mother gave me this doublet, in which her grandfather fought at Liege, and truly it looks as if it had been in the wars: she gave me her blessing with it! I know not which is most holy. My sister for want of better store, gave me her tears. And with all these, and a letter to that great general, de Treville, must I carve my way to fame. Bobbadillo, do thou befriend me.

POUCHET *re-enters with wine, which he places on table with mock ceremony, as D'ARTAGNAN is about to take up bottle, POUCHET takes it politely from him, wipes it with his apron and replaces it on table; same with glasses or cups.*

D'ART. This fellow certainly is laughing at me; and yet—would he dare? (*to sword, half drawing it*) Bob—but no, no, you shall not be soiled by such low game.

JACQUES. (*approaching D'ARTAGNAN*) May it please your honor,—he, he, he!

D'ART. Another! He laughing also?—or, no—perhaps 'tis a cold. Well, sirrah? Speak!

JACQUES. We were having a little merry-making—a dance. Would it disturb your honor's serenity, if——

D'ART. If you pursue your sport; no, oh no! You have my permission, proceed.

JACQUES. We thought, perhaps, your Excellency would like to join us.

D'ART. I, fellow? I never dance.

JACQUES. Is't not the fashion at Court?

D'ART. Not the Court I come from. Host! where is my change?

POU. I? Ch—change, your Highness? I trust I know better than to offer such an insult to one of your rank.

(D'ARTAGNAN looks at him scrutinizingly—POUCHET bows himself to a safe distance—D'ARTAGNAN puts his hand to his pocket and heaves a sigh; JACQUES goes across to table, L., hiding behind the females that surround it—They appear to tempt him to make fun of D'Artagnan. Two of the GIRLS, urged on by the others, cross to D'Artagnan's table, and as he pours out a cup of wine, one of them politely takes it from him, and in action drinks his health—he appears surprised, but recovering, bows politely to her, and pours out again, when the second GIRL, who, going behind him, has not been seen by him, takes the cup as he is about to drink; he is inclined to be angry, but turning and seeing only the two GIRLS, he raises his hat also to the second, his back being towards C., he takes a third cup from table and bows politely to them—is about to drink, when JACQUES throws an apple at him from opposite side of stage, L.)

D'ART. (throwing away cup in a rage) Ha! insulted! (GIRLS shriek, and run to L., as he draws his sword) This must be answered: Bobby, (to sword) here's a job for you! What dog dares thus to affront a gentleman? (all laugh) Ho, ho! you laugh do you; some of you shall pay dearly for this mirth. (takes the stage, swaggering round to see who is most worthy his attack—as he approaches all look demure; with a look of scorn he turns to his own table, and sheathing his sword, is about to sit, when JACQUES throws again)

ROCHEFORT, who has been enjoying the scene from window, now bursts into a hearty laugh.

D'ART. (starting, and seeing ROCHEFORT) Ha, ha! this will do. You, sir, you at the window. You are laughing at me. Your entertainment will cost you something yet.

ROCHEFORT shrugs his shoulders, and taking a coin from his pocket throws it to D'ARTAGNAN with an expression of contempt.

D'ARTAGNAN. What! insult a gentleman. Were you Richelieu himself, I would have satisfaction. Come down, or I'll make you. (runs towards window)

POUCHET and VILLAGERS. "Down with the insolent."

(the PEASANTS seize D'ARTAGNAN and drag him back towards R. C.—he throws them off; they get brooms and cudgels, and as he again approaches window, JACQUES, with a long staff knocks him down—One of the GENTLEMEN advances with his sword drawn—ROCHEFORT advances, and stays his hand)

ROCHE. Hold! He is punished sufficiently. (to VILLAGERS) Do you know him?

POU. I know such a murderous villain? No, your excellency.

ROCHE. Who or what can he be? Search for his papers, (POUCHET

and JACQUES search him, POUCHET takes from his breast pocket the letter to De Treville, he gives it to ROCHEFORT)

ROCHE. Ha! what is this? A letter to De Treville, captain of the king's musketeers. So, so! This may be of consequence to Richelieu. See him taken care of, I have no doubt that he is a gentleman. Respect his rank. (*signs to the two GENTLEMEN, who follow him into the inn. POUCHET suddenly assumes great sympathy*)

POU. Poor young gentleman, who could it be that struck him, I strongly suspect you, rascal! (*to JACQUES*)

JACQUES. Me? It was I who strove to defend him.

POU. Water there, bring some water!

JACQUES. Vinegar! vinegar!

POU. (*raising D'ARTAGNAN's head on his knee*) Vinegar's not good. (*aside*) It's too dear to waste, and nobody will pay me for it. Water! Plenty of it! (*all hurry about, POUCHET is chafing his temples*)

JACQUES. (*looking off, R. 1 E.*) Ha, the lady! (*POUCHET jumping up and dropping D'ARTAGNAN's head bump on the ground*) The lady, where? (*runs, R. to meet LADY DE WINTER*)

Enter LADY DE WINTER, R. 1 E.

POU. This way, your ladyship!

LADY W. Has a gentleman yet arrived from the Dieppe road?

POU. He waits your ladyship in the house.

LADY W. (*going up, sees D'ARTAGNAN who is beginning to recover*) Ha! who is this? what has happened?

D'ART. I'll teach you carte and tierce, rascals!

LADY W. Faith, a gentleman, though strangely habited.

D'ART. (*starting up*) Nay, come on, all of you! (*reels giddily*)

LADY W. (*kindly to him*) Sir, you are hurt?

D'ART. (*looking at her with admiration*) Indeed, madam, if I am, the sight of so much beauty has made me forget it, or the warm beams that shine from your eyes have cured me.

LADY W. I perceive you are not in much danger?

D'ART. In the presence of so much loveliness I could not be long safe.

LADY W. Spoken like a courtier; be this thy reward.

(*presents her hand which he kisses—she is bowed into the house by POUCHET—all the PEASANTS' insolence is turned into respect towards D'ARTAGNAN—she drops a glove which D'ARTAGNAN picks up, kisses, and puts in his bosom. He then draws himself up proudly to his extreme height and smiles patronisingly on the Peasants.*)

D'ART. What, creatures! you begin to find me out, do you? Despite one's travelling inelegance, the true-born gentleman will shine through all disguise. (*aside*) I may assume something on the strength of that beauty's notice. By-the-bye, I let her escape without learning where I should see her again. No matter! when I have re-arranged my toilette, I will venture into her presence and complete the conquest I have commenced. Host! wine there!

JACQUES *re-enters, and runs and fetches tankard of wine from table.*
Here's to the—— Host, what is that lady's name?

POU. I don't know, your Exeellency; but she is English.

D'ART. Go to her, present my humble regards, and—— Stay, what room is she in?

POU. She has gone, your honour.

D'ART. Gone?

POU. The moment she joined the gentleman, they went through the house, and have this instant departed for Paris.

D'ART. Who was the gentleman?

POU. He that took your letter?

D'ART. My letter! (*searches*) Why that's gone too.

JACQUES. (*R. of house, looks off, L. U. E.*) There goes the carriage.

D'ART. And my lady, I mean my letter—I'm for you, coward!

POU. (*holding him*) But——

D'ART. Out, dog! (*throws tankard of wine in POUCHET's face*) I'll catch them yet. (*jumps over the forms and table and runs off, R. U. E. knocking down all that oppose him*)

SCENE II.—*Handsome Chamber, with windows in F.*

Enter DE TREVILLE with a paper in his hand, R.

DE TREV. So, so! six of my musketeers have allowed themselves to be arrested by the same number of Richelieu's company. My musketeers—the picked men of the kingdom—the body guard of the king—the boast of the army—and to give way before an equal number of the Cardinal's myrmidons! Incredible, disgraceful. What, ho! Athos, Porthos, Aramis. But I cannot credit it—there must be some mistake.

Enter PORTHOS and ARAMIS, L. 1 E. PORTHOS wears a doublet and trunks, with immensely broad sword belt; his dress and belt have a double quantity of gold trimming in front, he having taken it all off the back which is very shabby, and which he wears a long heavy cloak to conceal. ARAMIS is dressed rather foppishly but not effeminate.

TREV. So, gentlemen, your honor has increased of late. I was with the king last night. Cardinal Richelieu was present. In my hearing he told the king, that six of my musketeers, and amongst the number, you Porthos, you Aramis, with Athos, were arrested, by half-a-dozen of his guards at a tavern; was it so? But I see it in your looks confirmed. No wonder that the king said he must recruit his guards from Richelieu's, for they were braver men—better soldiers. (*paces about. ARAMIS and PORTHOS showing signs of rage*) Come, Aramis, tell me why you wear a soldier's coat, when a priest's cassock would so well become you? And you, Porthos, why wear so rich a belt to bear a sword so useless? And, Athos, where is he? Athos!

ARAMIS. Sir, he is very ill.

TREV. Ha! What is his complaint?

PORT. Hem! By the Force of Physic, but they say 'tis the measles.

TREV. Measles! Say rather he is wounded: It is so, eh? On with the truth.

PORT. Well then, Captain, the truth is, we *were* six to six; but while at table, we were treacherously surrounded, and before we had time to draw, two of our number fell dead; Athos grievously wounded, was scarcely better off. For—you know Athos—twice he tried to rise, and twice fell down again; yet did we not surrender.

ARAMIS. No: till reinforcements of Richelieu's men arrived, and we were carried off by force.

PORT. But on our way we escaped. As for Athos, we left him for dead; and they thought him not worth carrying away.

ARAMIS. I can assure you, I had the honour of killing one of Richelieu's men with his own sword, for mine was broke at the first onset.

TREV. Hem; then it was not so bad after all.

ARAMIS. I entreat you, sir, not to say that Athos was wounded; for if it reaches the King's ear, 'twould hurt poor Athos more than the sword, although it entered his breast after passing through his shoulder.

TREV. Brave, brave Athos!

ATHOS, a pale melancholy noble, enters, L. 1 E.

ALL. Athos!

ATHOS. You summoned me, my comrades said. May I know your commands?

TREV. I was about to tell these gentlemen—that the King desires his Musketeers not to expose their lives in daily quarrels, for he knows them to be the bravest men in the world. I never thought otherwise, but for one moment, and then I did you wrong. Gentlemen, and you, noble Athos, pardon me. (*he presses ATHOS's hand, who writhes, and in vain endeavours to conceal the pain of his wound*)

ATHOS. His were a coward's heart that could tremble at danger, after the commands of so brave a leader.

PORT. Where is the Musketeer that would not think but too much honour to die for such a Captain. Blood of the brave! hah!

ARAMIS. The delight of obeying your commands can only be exceeded by the pleasure of sharing your dangers.

PORT. Flames of Vesuvius! but it is so.

TREV. Gentlemen, you overpower me. Run into no more quarrels—'tis the King's command: though, I dare swear, when time serves, you will not forget your debts to the Cardinal's men.

Exit, R.

PORT. Thunder of war!—who would not die for such a leader?

ARAMIS. Athos, let me lead you back to your chamber; you are ill?

ATHOS. 'Faith, I am somewhat weak: but good company banishes pain.—A seat.

PORT. Heart of steel! Aye, ten thousand seats! (*runs for chair, which he places near window—ARAMIS leads ATHOS to seat*)

ATHOS. Thanks! Why, good Porthos, wear that huge cloak this sultry weather? *Parbleu!* besides, 'tis a sin that thy handsome doublet, that becomes thee so well, should be obscured.

ARAMIS. That belt of thine would grace an emperor.

PORT. Ha, ha! a trifle. I despise these glittering gew-gaws: but since 'tis the fashion of the day, I e'en abide by it. Besides, we must lay out, somehow, the wealth that we inherit.

ARAMIS. Nay, Porthos, persuade us not that that gorgeous belt of thine was of thine own purchasing, say rather 'twas the gift of that veiled lady, I saw thee with, on Sunday last.

PORT. Ha, ha! shafts of Cupid, then must I confess?

ATHOS. The rich trimming of thy trunks; thy doublet too, the gift of some right royal dame?

PORT. Bright eyes of Venus, must I admit? But, harkee, Aramis, a word in thine ear. (*leads him, R*) The lady who waved her hand to you from the palace balcony, she whom I saw pass the guard-house in a carriage, the cypher on which was—let me see what were the letters?

ARAMIS. Nay, Porthos, my religious studies leave me no time to think of women.

ATHOS. Women! (*heaves a deep sigh and takes a small book from his pocket which he reads, PORTHOS and ARAMIS converse at back, PORTHOS bantering ARAMIS*)

Enter D'ARTAGNAN, shyly, L. 1 E.

D'ART. This is the anti-room then. The soldiers down stairs are playing at thrust and guard, those who give the most wounds get the most honor. Ah! of these three which will be Monsieur de Treville? Yon gentleman in the handsome doublet! Oh, what a handsome belt! Shall I ever live to wear a suit like that? Stay, no one would sit in presence of De Treville, and he stand! (*looks at ATHOS*) That's the Captain, I'll speak to him. Hem! have I the honour to address Captain de Treville?

ATHOS. No!

D'ART. Oh! Is that gentleman in the gold-covered coat the Captain?

ATHOS. No!

D'ART. Oh! He speaks very sharply. (*aside and addressing his sword*) Must we stand this, Bob? Never mind, I'll try once more. (*to ATHOS*) Is that fair gentleman, the Captain?

ATHOS (*annoyed*) No!

D'ART. (*looks at him then at sword*) Presently, Bob, presently.

(*ARAMIS conversing with PORTHOS takes a rich lace pocket handkerchief from his belt, and to prevent PORTHOS, who attempts to snatch it, to see the initials, but inadvertently drops it behind him*)

D'ART. We'll take some other opportunity to punish him. I don't understand the manners of these great people, and must master my wrath, and practise politeness. Ha, that gentleman has

dropped his pocket handkerchief! A good opportunity to display my civility. (*approaches ARAMIS*) Sir! Hem! Sir! Pardon me, but you have dropped your handkerchief.

ARAMIS. (*vexed, and moving, more effectually to conceal it from* PORTHOS) No, sir, I have not,

D'ART. Oh, yes—indeed!

ARAMIS. I say no, sir. (*puts his foot on it*)

D'ART. But I say yes; see, here it is. (*lifting it up*)

ARAMIS. How know you it is mine?

D'ART. You dropped it. What is your name, sir? This handkerchief is marked—C. B.

PORT. Ha, ha! What!—C. B.? Fire and——

ARAMIS. (*crossing past D'ARTAGNAN*) You're an ass!

D'ART. (*turning furiously*) What?

ARAMIS. A fool!

D'ART. Here's a job for you, Bob: draw!

ARAMIS. Not here, sir, we should be interrupted. Meet me at the Fort St. Leon.

D'ART. I will! At what hour?

ARAMIS. At three. Come! or I'll brand you as a coward, and cut your ears off. *Exit, L. 1 E.*

D'ART. (*tapping his sword*) We'll be there. Three o'clock, leaves me just three hours to think of it. In three hours there's a job for you, Bob! But I shall require some one to second me. I wonder if that gentleman——

PORT. (*musings and chuckling*) C. B.; ha, ha, ha! Riddle of the Great Sphinx, who can C. B. be? Ha, ha! he'd have me believe some princess; while, perhaps, 'tis some butcher's daughter, or a chambermaid, ha, ha, ha!

D'ART. He's the jolliest fellow I ever saw. He'll be my second, I know. Sir—— (*gently touching his cloak, which PORTHOS does not observe*)

PORT. The folly of affectation; when the slightest accident may unmask it; ha, ha, ha!

D'ART. He doesn't notice; but he shall. (*PORTHOS' back is towards him, he gives a hard tug at PORTHOS' long cloak; it falls off—discovering the patched jacket and trunks, from the back of which all the trimming has been taken off; the back of the rich belt is tied with lengths of tape of different colours.—D'ARTAGNAN appears amazed at the discovery—PORTHOS, feeling his cloak fall, turns round in a tremendous rage*)

PORT. Blood of Mars!

D'ART. Sir, I—I really—— (*tries to peep behind PORTHOS again, who backs round from R. C. to L. to prevent it, struggling to pull his cloak over himself again*)

PORT. Base plebeian! you have exposed me. That carcass of thine shall fare the worse. Meet me.

D'ART. I will, at any hour but three.

PORT. At two, sir.

D'ART. Where?

PORT. At the Fort St. Leon,

D'ART. I will! at two!

PORT. At two. Souls of the Furies! At two, sir, two! (*backs off, L. 1 E., that D'ARTAGNAN may not see the patches*)

D'ART. At two; then I shall only have two hours to think about it. Bob! there's a job for you in two hours! Now, who will be my second? Ha, ha, ha! what a coat—as bad as my own; what a belt; what a patch. I was deceived by appearances. This one seems to be sulkiest of the lot, he may prove to be the best tempered. (*approaches ATHOS, who has been lost in thought*) It's of no use being too shy. I'll speak openly. (*slaps him on the wounded shoulder, the right*) Sir!

ATHOS. (*starts up, uttering a cry of pain*) Villain! How durst you—— oh! my wound.

D'ART. A wound! Ten thousand pardons! I would not for the world——

ATHOS. Was that the way to approach a superior?

D'ART. (*proudly*) Superior! I must know where to find one.

ATHOS. Boy! you shall be taught.

D'ART. By whom?

ATHOS. No! Being a boy, I spare you. (*crosses to L. 1 E.*)

D'ART. Spare! spare me! We can't stand that Bob, can we? (*to ATHOS*) Come, sir, draw! let me see how much of this I can spare you.

ATHOS. Pshaw! headstrong; I would not murder you.

D'ART. I insist!

ATHOS. Meet me then, at the Fort St. Leon, in an hour.

D'ART. In an hour; I will be there!

ATHOS. I shall expect you.

Exit, L. 1 E.

D'ART. In an hour—at one o'clock—Bobby, there's a job for you in an hour, my old friend!—ha, ha! Well this is lucky: three of them in a day. But, stay; should the first one kill me, I shall be so rude as to disappoint the other two. Never mind, as they have all chosen the same spot, those who come last will have the satisfaction of knowing that I was there to my time; and it's no fault of mine if I can't be killed three times. That poor man with the wound, I shouldn't like to hurt him again, for I was certainly in the wrong. The young man with the handkerchief, I was not to blame about. But that, ha, ha, ha! that tinsel man—ha, ha, ha! his showy front and shabby back, ha, ha, ha! He must always face his enemy, for he'd be ashamed to show his rear, ha, ha, ha! (*drops into chair*).

Enter DE TREVILLE, R. 1 E. reading a paper; stops suddenly on seeing D'ARTAGNAN who does not observe him.

D'ART. If I had an army they should all be clothed so, they'd be ashamed to show their backs to the enemy, though ever so cowardly. By-the-bye, I wonder if all De Treville's men are clad the same way. And I wonder if he's as bare behind as his men — ha, ha, ha!

TREV. (*advancing*) What?

D'ARTAGNAN *turns round in his seat, till he faces DE TREVILLE ; his laugh gradually subsides to a look of vacancy.*

TREV. You appear to be merry, sir.

D'ART. As my life is likely to be a short, it may as well be a merry one.

TREV. Why a short one?

D'ART. I have just had a challenge.

TREV. From one of the gentlemen you found here?

D'ART. From all three of them.

TREV. Impossible; They are three of the best swordsmen in the kingdom.

D'ART. (*reflecting*) Then I must break my word.

TREV. You repent?

D'ART. No. But having challenged three such men the last two are sure to be disappointed. By the bye, don't let you and I quarrel, for the fact is I shall want you for a second; now, now, don't frown.

TREV. The boy's mad! Second you against three of my own guards?

D'ART. Your! Then you are——

TREV. Captain de Treville.

D'ART. (*drops on his knees abruptly*) Oh, pardon me, sir. I knew you not.

TREV. Nay, rise!

D'ART. I kneel, sir, not to the rank you hold, but in humble admiration of the gentleman, whose courage and virtues it has been my father's daily care to make me well acquainted with.

TREV. And your father is——

D'ART. Monsieur D'Artagnan.

TREV. Formerly of Poitiers?

D'ART. The same.

TREV. The object of your visit to Paris?

D'ART. To enter your service: My highest ambition to be one of your Musketeers.

TREV. I have no doubt you are the person you represent yourself to be. But have you no credentials?

D'ART. At the Inn of Calais, whilst stunned upon the ground, my letter was stolen from me by a cavalier richly dressed, who escaped before I knew my loss.

TREV. Doubtless some spy of Richelieu's. A pale man. With black hair? Rochefort by name?

D'ART. The same, sir. Let me but catch sight of him, (*aside*) and Bob shall arrange all differences.

TREV. (*aside*) A youth of noble courage. (*to him*) And you would be one of my Musketeers? (D'ARTAGNAN *bows*) And you begin their acquaintanceship by cutting three of their throats? Suppose I stop this duel—explain to them that you will take some other opportunity to prove your valour; think you, you could so retain your impetuosity as to obey my commands.

D'ART. To a word. But I have promised to meet them. Time wears—this affair once over——

TREV. It will be too late to ask a service of me. Promise therefore not to draw your sword until I have given you——

D'ART. (*looking through window, exclaims suddenly*) Ha! there he is! The villain that stole my letter. He shan't escape. (*throws open window, and jumps on chair*)

TREV. Are you mad?

D'ART. More work for you, Bobby; a job for you at once. (*jumps through window, sword in hand*)

TREV. The madman will be dashed to pieces! 'Tis the Cardinal's spy Rochefort—he turns the corner—the youth pursues him—brave heart! May he conquer.

Exit, R. 1 E.

SCENE III.—*Queen's Reception Chamber. Folding doors, R. and L., in L. F. sliding panel or secret door; tables, chairs, ottomans, &c., &c.*

Secret door slowly opens, CONSTANCE peeps in, then cautiously enters. BUCKINGHAM is seen within.

CONS. Most luckily, I am here in time. (*approaches panel*) My lord, you must remain a prisoner for a few moments; I cannot approach her majesty at present.

BUCK. But I die with impatience.

CONS. Then you must die for a few minutes longer. Be sure not to move till I give two double taps, so. She's approaching this apartment.

BUCK. (*stepping from panel*) Alone?

CONS. No! To your retreat again, instantly, and let me caution you not to listen; for when ladies are together, gentlemen should not hear all that's said. Away, away!

He retires, she closes the panel.

Two LADIES advance from the Queen's Room, R. door, and stand on either side. The QUEEN enters followed by LADY DE WINTER and other LADIES—the QUEEN seats herself on L. of large table which stands R. C. of stage, motions LADY DE WINTER to be seated, she sits R. of table—one of the LADIES has brought with her a handsome casket which she places on table—the QUEEN during conversation takes from it a pair of splendid diamond studs, and adjusts them on her sleeve, then towards the end of her dialogue with LADY DE WINTER, appears to be indifferent about them, and carelessly returns them to casket.

QUEEN. (*as continuing conversation*) 'Tis a source of pleasure at any time to welcome to my Court, the graces of another land; but now that state policy makes me rather a prisoner than a Queen, your visit is doubly valuable.

LADY W. Viewing the position your Majesty enjoys. The envy of foreign princesses—the love of your own people—the admira-

tion of your royal husband. 'Twere a vain task to surmise how you could experience any sensations but those of uninterrupted happiness.

QUEEN. Lady de Winter, you who live in a country of boundless liberty cannot conceive the thralldom of a land like ours, where even the highest lady in it, cannot give utterance to a thought, that is not by spies conveyed to those who misinterpret it for their own vile purposes. (*severally to LADIES who draw slightly back*)

LADY W. Are you so placed?

QUEEN. (*confidentially to LADY DE WINTER*) Yes! Midst all the beauties of my Court, I find not one true heart to beat in sympathy with its mistress. I should fear to speak so freely to you, but that coming from England, where all that's good and noble makes its home—where ministers like Buckingham, hold power by the people's love, not fear; I know you must partake of the generous sentiments his name inspires, so do I confide in you.

LADY W. You have a Richelieu, that outshines our Buckingham.

QUEEN. Fie, fie! You satirize. Richelieu to Buckingham! The crafty foe, to the noble lion. Richelieu, once the warrior, now the priest; in mind and action crafty, and venomous as the serpent.

LADY W. A clever statesman——

QUEEN. Who makes the midnight spy his confidante, and his Queen, the victim of his plots. (*throws studs into casket*)

LADY W. (*evading the conversation*) Those studs are very beautiful.

QUEEN. They were given me by the king upon my wedding day. Baubles! (*closes casket*)

LADY W. A regal present, truly. Queen (*turning sees CONSTANCE, L. C.*)—Ha, Constance! (*kindly*)

CONS. May it please your Majesty, your physician awaits your pleasure.

QUEEN. I am engaged; I cannot——

CONS. (*kneeling, pretends to pick up a richly embroidered pocket handkerchief, and presents it to the QUEEN*) Your Majesty! (*the QUEEN takes it, looks at the corner and becomes faint, leans back in chair; her hand with the handkerchief in it resting on the table—*

LADY DE WINTER suspecting some reason for the QUEEN'S faintness, approaches to assist her, looks at the corner of the handkerchief)

LADY W. Heavens! 'Tis the cypher of the Duke of Buckingham.

QUEEN. (*recovering*) Constance, on further thought, I will see him. (*turning coldly to LADIES, who have surrounded her*) To my chamber, ladies; I would confer with him alone.

All the LADIES exit through door, R.

Lady de Winter, can you find amusement in my cabinet for a few moments? Yet I am loth to lose you.

LADY W. I wait with impatience the pleasure of rejoining your Majesty.

Exit after the LADIES—CONSTANCE watches her off, and then goes to the panel, which she opens during the following speech.

QUEEN. 'Tis his! 'tis his! and once more sunshine warms my

heart. Constance, good, faithful girl; when, when shall I see him again?

BUCKINGHAM *advances from panel.*

BUCK. Now, lady, at thy feet. (*kneels*)

Exit CONSTANCE, L. D.

QUEEN. Oh, Buckingham, what rashness are you guilty of!

BUCK. 'Twas to see you once more before I quitted France; do not blame me.

QUEEN. You had already bidden me farewell. Why encounter the pain of another parting?

BUCK. A cold farewell indeed! Surrounded as we were, could I be content with such adieus?

QUEEN. But the danger of your being seen here. Death threatens you, dishonour menaces me. Why did you return?

BUCK. Had I not read a language in those eyes that spoke of hope to me—I had not ventured.

QUEEN. You have misconstrued their meaning. You forget, sir, that I am Anne of Austria.

BUCK. Thinking but of my love, I *do* forget it; do you forget it too: forget the queen, and let the woman show compassion.

QUEEN. (*relenting and kindly*) Ah, Buckingham, why have you endangered my peace of mind? Why did I ever see you, or why too late? This meeting is fraught with danger to us both. Ah, leave me, whilst yet I have the power to part with you.

BUCK. Think of the dangers I have encountered to see—to speak to you once more; ah, dismiss me not so soon.

QUEEN. Buckingham, no more! You must instantly return.

BUCK. And carry back no token of your regard—no pledge that I am not hateful to you.

QUEEN. I dare stay no longer. Every act of mine is watched; every moment swells our danger. Oh, Buckingham, begone! The ice on which we stand is melting fast beneath our feet; think of the depth to which we sink should we but fall. Fly, fly! Away disguise! I *will* confess I love you, Buckingham: but hold! 'tis a hopeless love: the Queen's pride shall repair the woman's weakness. Let us not meet again.

BUCK. Meet no more?

QUEEN. Never, never! You know my secret—'tis crime, 'tis guilt to indulge the passion. Therefore, let us part.

BUCK. For ever?

QUEEN. Aye, for ever! with honour we can meet no more; let us not meet at all, until the grave shall free me from these ties of earth! and (oh! would it were to-day!) then, I am thine eternally! (*BUCKINGHAM kisses her hand—a distant flourish heard*)

Re-enter CONSTANCE, L. D.

CONS. Madame, the King approaches!

QUEEN. Buckingham, save yourself while you yet have time.

BUCK. Adieu, adieu. Give me a glove! a ribbon!

QUEEN. (*rapidly going to her door, R.*) Remain one moment. (*another flourish nearer—QUEEN pauses*)

CONS. Madame! 'tis his Majesty. (*goes to panel*) Come, sir, come! (*to BUCKINGHAM*)

QUEEN. (*giving him casket*) Accept this! 'Twill serve to remind you of one whom 'twere wiser to forget.

BUCK. Farewell! farewell! we yet shall meet again.

QUEEN. (*going with him to panel*) Never, never! Farewell!

Exit BUCKINGHAM, through panel.

A loud flourish is heard, L.—a voice outside exclaims, "The King!"

QUEEN. Constance, Constance! I cannot close the panel! (*CONSTANCE runs to it—it is closed*)

Doors, L., are thrown open—two PAGES bow the KING in—the QUEEN advances to meet him.

KING. I have the honor to salute your Majesty. Is your suite so small, that you are without attendants?

QUEEN. I have a visitor, a lady from the English Court; hearing of your Majesty's approach, I quitted her society for yours. (*puts handkerchief in her sachel*)

KING. From the English Court. Some friend of that Buckingham, doubtless; I will see her.

PAGE announces, "His Eminence the Cardinal Richelieu," at the same time, CONSTANCE introduces LADY DE WINTER, who enters, followed by the other LADIES, R.—RICHELIEU bows to the QUEEN, who does not conceal her dislike to him.—LADY DE WINTER advances, R., exchanging recognition (*unseen by the others*) with RICHELIEU.

QUEEN. (R. C.) Your Majesty!—Lady de Winter. (*presents her*)

KING. (L. C.) Welcome, madam, to our Court. (*to RICHELIEU, L.*) Who is this Englishwoman—a friend of Buckingham's, think ye?

RICH. No doubt, your Majesty. (*aside*) 'Tis well, no one suspects her to be an agent of my own. (*to KING*) Buckingham has been seen in Paris, within two days.

KING. Is't possible? Has he dared to correspond with the Queen?

RICH. 'Tis most probable.

KING. How to ascertain?

RICH. Let her apartments, nay, herself, be searched.

KING. If there be proofs of their correspondence; at any cost they shall be mine. I will not trust to other hands: be the office, to clear her of suspicion or condemn her, thine.

RICH. I appreciate the honor you entrust me with. (*RICHELIEU crosses to C. and bows to QUEEN, who has been conversing with LADY DE WINTER*)

KING. Your Majesty, I had something to communicate; but, before your foreign friend, I cannot speak. My lord, the Cardinal, will execute my wishes, and, having my full permission for what must follow, I leave the result in his hands.

QUEEN. What can his Eminence say to me, that I would not rather hear from you?

KING. The Cardinal has my instructions.

Exit L., followed by PAGES.

QUEEN. My lord Cardinal, what new insult is designed for me?

RICH. None, your Majesty, that I could save you from. My only motive is, to prove your Majesty's honor; and to reconcile you to the King.

QUEEN. Was it to prove my honor, that, when the King's jealousy grew oppressive, you took advantage of my indifference to him, to insult me, by revealing a passion it is a crime for a priest to feel, and treason for a subject to dare utter?

RICH. My only motive, believe me, madam. I knew your loyalty could not be shaken; nor would a poor worm like me, dare to approach your sacred form, but with the reverence a holy man may justly cherish for a saint.

QUEEN (*aside*) Wily hypocrite. Your office, sir—what would you?

RICH. This, madam! His Majesty commands me to search for certain documents, which—To be brief, madam, I have the King's sanction to enter that room. (*points, R.*)

QUEEN. Must not my own cabinet be respected?

RICH. I know my duty, and shall fulfil it. (*he crosses to R.—to LADIES*) Follow me!

He exits into room, R., they after him.

QUEEN. (*pacing up and down*) Insolence! But with all his cunning, I o'ereach him. I have but one letter I care to conceal. (*takes letter from satchet hanging at her side—to LADY DE WINTER, who is R.*) These outrages, in the Court of England, would meet with detestation. Here, they excite no surprise at the aggression, nor sympathy for the victim.

LADY W. Shall I conceal that letter for you?

QUEEN. No, no! I will not endanger you. Here, (*puts it in her bosom*) it may bide untouched, at least. The person of the Queen is safe—though dare the Cardinal presume, e'en that might be doubtful. (*sits at table*)

RICHELIEU returns, followed by LADIES.

RICH. Madam, let my hasty return convince you that I have not too strictly exercised my office.

QUEEN. I thank you.

RICH. Unpleasant though the task, my search must be continued.

QUEEN. (*to CONSTANCE*) Give the Cardinal my keys.

RICH. Nay, I spare your caskets, and would that my conscience permitted me to be as lenient to your person.

QUEEN. (*starting up enraged*) What?

RICH. You blush!

QUEEN. And well I may, at so monstrous an indignity.

RICH. A sign of guilt.

QUEEN. A sign of scorn, thou heartless bigot.

RICH. I shall not flinch from my duty. (*as he is about to advance*

towards her, QUEEN snatches off satchet from her side and casts it on ground)

QUEEN. There, sir! (*he stoops for it*) Stoop, aye, to the ground! Nothing can be too low to serve his Eminence, the Cardinal.

RICH. Humbleness is my vocation—I have stooped before your Majesty, ere now.

QUEEN scornfully retires up c., LADY DE WINTER takes the opportunity to sign by pantomime to him that the letter is in the Queen's bosom, she then goes up also, his back to the QUEEN he opens satchet and discovers the Duke of Buckingham's handkerchief, the cypher attracts his attention, he examines it, and with a threatening gesture towards the QUEEN, he with exultation puts it in his pocket unobserved by any one else—he places the satchet on the nearest table.

QUEEN. (*advancing*) Have you searched? Contains it any treason?

RICH. No, madam, but your bosom does.

QUEEN. (*bantering him*) Would you tear secrets from my heart?

RICH. No, madam, not when your corset may serve as well. (*approaching her*)

QUEEN. You would not dare to place your hand upon me.

RICH. My zeal for the King will not be stayed. (*advances*)

QUEEN. (*retreating a step or two*) Approach me at your peril.

RICH. I must.

QUEEN. Are you women, that stand by and will not save me from this base outrage?

RICH. (*peremptorily*) Retire all! I command.

The LADIES retire into room, R.

QUEEN. (*to LADY DE WINTER*) You—you will not desert me.

RICH. Her Majesty has nothing to fear. You can remain. Now, madam, resistance is in vain, submit!

QUEEN. Sooner would I die.

RICH. And I, rather than not execute the King's commission. (*approaches her*)

QUEEN. Ruffian! I comprehend your brutal object, and will foil you. (*stays him with her left hand and draws forth a letter with the other, then throws it on the ground*) There is my secret; take it, and with it my contempt.

Exit, R.

RICH. (*looks after her*) A fine woman, very! 'Tis a pity she doesn't—

LADY W. (*at his elbow*) Favour you a little more, eh, my lord Cardinal?

RICH. Ah, ha! Your ladyship is so penetrating.

LADY W. Under so able a tutor as your Eminence, I should be dull indeed, did I not pick up something.

RICH. (*showing handkerchief*) I wonder that your ladyship did not contrive to pick up this.

LADY W. 'Tis the Duke of Buckingham's.

RICH. Your intelligence is rather late. Behold the initials!

LADY W. That kerchief was given to the Queen not an hour since.

RICH. Indeed ! By whom ?

LADY W. That confidante of hers, Constance.

RICH. I thought her too low to bribe. But yet she must belong to me. Ha, ha ! Well, 'tis very true, as the Queen says, I do stoop very low sometimes.

LADY W. Hem !

RICH. I said sometimes.

LADY W. Her face struck me as being very familiar—where, till now, could I have possibly seen it.

RICH. I cannot well surmise. I find her husband useful, and the wife by his means, though she knows it not;—but she can be doubly servicable now, and must, or——

LADY W. Or what ?

RICH. It is possible Monsieur Boniface may have to sleep alone. After all, Lady de Winter, I have much to thank you for.

LADY W. More than you surmise.

RICH. Explain !

LADY W. Buckingham has been here. Has had an interview with the Queen.

RICH. And I not know it ? Where were my sluggard hirelings ?

LADY W. He has received a parting present—a token of her love for him.

RICH. (*jealousy gets the better of him*) Damnation ! (*checks himself*) must ever be the reward of crime.

LADY W. Hem ! the less we say of that, the better.

RICH. The pledge ! the gift !—what is it ?

LADY W. A casket, containing twelve diamond studs.

RICH. The present the King made her on her wedding-day ! Glorious ! Inestimable woman, how shall I reward you ? You have given me the world—how can I repay you ?

LADY W. By giving me what sets the world at defiance.

RICH. I understand you. Ho ! there, without !

Enter PAGE, L. D.

(*he writes on tablets, while doing so, says*) Accuse her now before the King !—what should I gain by that ? She is impetuous, and would not weigh the consequences. No, no ; she must have time ; and so must I. A *public* exposure she would shrink from : before the Court, her bravery would fail her ; and she would come to *my* terms. Yes, yes, let her rage cool down, and terror will supply its place. Good ! good ! Take this (*giving tablet to PAGE*) to his Majesty—quick !

Exit PAGE, L. D.

Your Ladyship : in what time could you travel to London and back ?

LADY W. In eight days.

RICH. More rapid than the Courier's rate.

LADY W. I am no courier ; but can reach London, and be back in eight days. Will !

RICH. You are acquainted with Buckingham ? (*she sighs*, RICHE-

LIEU *observing her, shakes his head*) Ah, we all have our secrets! I shall be your confessor some day. In short: could you within ten, yes, well, say *ten* days, place within my hands two of those same studs?

LADY W. It is a task that I am pleased with. You shall have the twelve by that time; or——

RICH. Nay, nay—two; my best evidence will be the other ten being found in his possession *when* I want them. Your journey will cost you——

LADY W. (*archly*) Five hundred louis d'or!

RICH. (*smiles at the exorbitance*) The service is worth five thousand! That sum shall be at your hotel within an hour: by that time be prepared for your journey.

LADY W. (*gaily, as she goes off, L.*) Ha, ha, ha! you'll find I'll beat the couriers!

Exit, L.

RICH. (*calls after her*) Two, remember two! (*rubs his hands*) A very, very clever woman that: Cardinals can never marry, or she's the kind of woman (*reflecting*) that I would have nothing to do with! However, she's entirely in my service. The King is my slave! The Queen—if she will not bend to my love, I'll crush her with my hatred. The proofs of her interview with, and regard for this Buckingham once in my possession, she must find a refuge in my merey; or the block! the axe! shall rid me of my jealousy.

Enter PAGE, L. D.

PAGE. The King!

Enter KING, L. D.

RICH. Your Majesty, I am pleased to have another opportunity to display my vigilance for your welfare. Behold! how my search has ended.

KING. (*taking letter*) A letter! (*reads—RICHELIEU watches his features intently—KING, who commences the letter with a frown, assumes a more pleasing aspect, till towards the conclusion of the letter he looks up smiling cheerfully*) Why, my Lord Cardinal, 'tis—ha, ha! —'tis you I should be jealous of.

RICH. Your Majesty?

KING. The Queen's letter is to her brother and the Emperor of Austria—your's the only name mentioned beside.

RICH. Am I so honoured?

KING. Yes; she requests them to demand your instant dismissal, or to declare war against France!

RICH. By heavens! she must have had another letter in her bosom; clever trick! (*aside*) Has my anxiety for your Majesty's honor led me so far astray. We must apologize.

KING. I would be friends with the Queen! direct me how.

RICH. Her Majesty leads too secluded a life. Suppose, sire, you were to give a state ball.

KING. It shall be so; summon the Queen! (*to PAGE*)

Exit PAGE, R. D.

RICH. Your Majesty has been too distant to the Queen of late : and, following ever in your steps, I fear I too am at fault.

KING. Ha, you priests love not women, so must be excused.

Enter QUEEN, R. D., followed by LADIES.

QUEEN. What new insult am I summoned to bear?

KING. None, my beauteous Austria, none; I desire to make atonement for past errors.

QUEEN. I am your Majesty's slave.

KING. Nay, nay! i'faith, not so. I would willingly return to my fealty, and become your's. Can we be friends on no terms?

QUEEN. (*kindly to KING*) Would your Majesty ever speak as kindly as you do; we should need no mediators, nor apologies.

KING. I'faith, you are right. (*kisses her hand*) Forgive me. Jealous of your beauty, we have kept you too secluded. Having been pleasingly convinced that our suspicions were unfounded; to show you that our love and confidence have returned, we purpose giving a state ball, if you approve.

QUEEN. Oh, gladly!

KING. When shall it be?

QUEEN. When you command.

KING. Nay 'tis for your pleasure—say Thursday next.

QUEEN. With all my heart!

RICH. (*interfering*) Your Majesty forgets that you receive the citizens of Rouen, on that day.

KING. Say the day after.

RICH. 'Twill scarce give time to complete the preparations for a state ball. (*aside*) I cannot get the studs in time. Would it please your Majesty, on Thursday week, ten days from this.

KING. (*to QUEEN*) Say you?

QUEEN. Most willingly!

RICH. (*looking maliciously at QUEEN*) Dare I suggest——

KING. Say on.

RICH. The plainness of her Majesty's attire I have, with pain, heard made the subject of remark. The citizens complain of failing trade. The merchants murmur that their foreign fabrics find no market. (*maliciously shewing handkerchief to QUEEN, spread out to the fullest extent*) Such trifles e'en as these can find no purchasers. (*the QUEEN puts her hand suddenly to her side and misses the sachel—she looks terrified and imploringly at CONSTANCE, who comprehends her and glides round to table, L.—to KING*) And yet the work is very beautiful; is it not? (*KING looks at it carelessly, but as he turns away, sees the initial, a large embroidered "B"*)

KING. (*starting towards L.*) The cypher "B. B."

CONSTANCE *takes it gently, coming between the KING and RICHELIEU, as KING, without looking, hands it back; RICHELIEU, C., moves back indignantly, leaving it in her possession.*

CONSTANCE. (*respectfully, L. C.*) Your Eminence's praises of my humble workmanship, confuse and overpower me.

KING. Your workmanship? the letter "B?"

COX. The initial of my husband's name.

RICH. (*enraged at first but relaxing as he admires her cleverness*) True! his name is Boniface. (*with meaning*) He may well be proud of such a clever little wife. (CONSTANCE goes round to back of Queen's chair)

KING. (*laughs at his supposed mistake, aside to CARDINAL*) What a jealous fool am I. (*to QUEEN*) For this ball her Majesty will put on her most gorgeous state, that these rude citizens complain no more.

RICH. I know her Majesty has jewels rare, would she but deign to show them; the diamond studs you gave her at your bridal, her Majesty I know must prize those emblems of her purity. (QUEEN clings to arm of chair for support)

KING. Her Majesty will wear them then?

QUEEN. I—I——

KING. We shall think it is our marriage day again.

RICH. Those, if no others.

KING. Right—those, if no others, you hear?

QUEEN. (*faintly*) I do!

KING. You will not fail? (*going towards L. D.*)

QUEEN. No!

KING. I prize them highly.

RICH. Her Majesty remembers the day; and will not forget the studs.

QUEEN. (*clasps her hands and sinks back in seat*) Lost! lost! (CONSTANCE bends over her)

RICHELIEU exults, and is slowly following KING out, L. D.—loud flourish.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Exterior of the Fortress St. Leon.*

Enter ATHOS, PORTHOS, and ARAMIS, R. 1 E.

PORT. Arms of Achilles! Athos, you are in no condition to fight a duel.

ARAMIS. But that I know, at three o'clock, I shall require your services as seconds, I should have persuaded you to remain at home. No man of honor would challenge you to fight, invalid as you are.

ATHOS. I challenged him!

PORT. Chimera of the burning brain! but that was madness. By Bacchus! 'tis strange; I have a meeting at two!

ARAMIS. Is't possible? You then anticipated me by an hour.

ATHOS. Gentlemen, your attention!—Here comes my man!

D'ARTAGNAN *runs in L., while he stands panting, the clock strikes one.*

ARAMIS. Why, that individual is my man!

PORT. Obscurities of Fate! Why, 'tis my man too!

D'ART. (*out of breath*) Oh! stay a moment, I am not going to fight three at once. I am this gentleman's man, at present; not your's till two—nor your's till three. But I am ready to begin now. Will either of you gentlemen be my second?

ATHOS. You are already out of breath; I shall attack you at a disadvantage.

D'ART. Ha, ha! I was afraid of being too late. I was talking to the Chevalier de Treville, who was promising me a place in his Musketeer Guards; when, of a sudden, I caught sight of a gentleman I owed something to. I was afraid of losing him, so I jumped out of window. (*all look at each other in surprise*) By-the-bye, that window's too high; twenty feet is quite high enough for a jump. To make short of it, my gentleman escaped. Ah, Bobby, if we had but caught him.

ARAMIS. (*c., to Porthos*) The fellow has courage?

PORT. And humour?

D'ART. I did not know what to do for a friend to second me: but meeting a captain of Richelieu's Guard, I asked him to direct me here. He, knowing the place, guessed my errand, and promised to serve me.

ATHOS. Why is he not with you?

D'ART. An accident prevented it; I assure you, nothing else. Coming along, I heard Notre Dame chime the quarters. Said I, "there are three-quarters past twelve, we must hurry on." Says he, "you are mistaken, it is but half-past twelve, and a gentleman never runs." "Run, or not," said I, "it was three-quarters." He stuck to it's being but half-past. We began to quarrel: he drew his sword: Bob here, was out in a moment. It was thrust and parry with us for two minutes: at last, his sword arm being rather too high, I got him under the elbow, and run him through the ribs.

ATHOS. Dead?

D'ART. Really, sir, I can't tell, for I took to my heels as fast as possible, fearing that I might keep you waiting.

PORT. Good! Son of Bellona! I admire the lad. (*patronizingly*) Youth! If I had not to kill thee presently, I could love thee.

D'ART. I am sure I am indebted.

ATHOS. Come, time wastes.

D'ART. Stay, sir, you are wounded. An invalid! I am sincerely sorry for having hurt you, and even if you kill me, it will only irritate your wound. Let me entreat you then to be third, instead of first, and the chances are, two to one, that you won't have to exert yourself at all.

ARAMIS. Nobly said! It shall be. I will take his place.

ATHOS. It shall not be—come on, sir!

D'ART. (*aside*) I'll stand on my guard, and so tire him out—I shouldn't like to hurt him. Now, Bob, for number one! (*they begin to fight*)

PORT. } (*staying them*) Hold! Hold! (*they pause*)
 ARAMIS. }

PORT. Bastions and Grenades! Who have we here? Richelieu's guard!

D'ART. They'll not interfere.

ARAMIS. They will, indeed.

D'ART. They had better not.

All stand L. C. and L., as a CAPTAIN and six of Richelieu's GUARD enter, R.

CAPTAIN. Gentlemen, as it is evident that you are here for the purposes of duelling, you must consider yourselves my prisoners. As for that young stranger, guilty of the death of Captain St. Aubin, I charge him to surrender.

D'ART. You must wait then; for I'm engaged to these gentlemen and can't come.

CAPT. My orders are positive. Gentlemen, I am compelled to demand your swords.

ATHOS. And you will be compelled to earn them 'ere you take them.

D'ART. And you'll find the "four points" difficult to deal with.

CAPT. I know my duty; but will take your words, gentlemen, to appear when called on. As for that stranger he must go with me at once.

ATHOS. Sir, he is a brave man, and one of us—our motto is, "One for all," and "All for one." We will defend him!

CAPT. (*to SOLDIERS*) Secure your prisoner!

A general mêlée—PORTHOS, ARAMIS, and D'ARTAGNAN, beat all off, R. and L. except the CAPTAIN who remains fighting with ATHOS, who overcome by him falls as D'ARTAGNAN enters rapidly and interposes, CAPTAIN and D'ARTAGNAN renew the fight while ATHOS rises, D'ARTAGNAN overthrows CAPTAIN, R. C., and holds sword to his throat.

D'ART. Beg your life!

CAPT. I scorn it!

D'ART. Then you're a brave man, and shall have it without. Rise!

He rises, politely salutes D'ARTAGNAN, and exits, R. 1 E., as PORTHOS and ARAMIS run on, L., D'ARTAGNAN turns to meet them.

D'ART. Now, Bob, you're in your glory. (*about to attack them, sees his mistake, he raises his hat, they return the salute*)

ATHOS. (*to D'ARTAGNAN*) Sir, you have done me a service—I thank you!

D'ART. Are we still to fight?

ATHOS. Your courage is unquestionable. Let us be friends.

ARAMIS. He shall be one of us.

PORT. Sword of mighty Agamemnon! Shall be! Is——

D'ART. Nothing on earth can please me so well. If I have offended as I fear I have, blame my country manners and my father's counsel.

ATHOS. And that was——

D'ART. Honor the King—obey Monsieur de Treville, and never refuse to fight.

ARAMIS. Good advice, truly. But Athos grows weak.

D'ART. The lodging I have taken is not far from this place, let me lead you there.

ATHOS. With all my heart. We meet at Monsieur de Treville's in the evening.

PORT. And remember our motto.

ALL. One for all and all for one!

ARAMIS and PORTHOS exeunt, R., D'ARTAGNAN and ATHOS, L.

SCENE II.—*Chamber (old oak) in Boniface's House. Tables and chairs discovered.*

Enter BONIFACE and CONSTANCE, R., quarrelling, BONIFACE is enormously fat and bloated.

BONI. But, Madame Boniface, remember I am a man of independent property—and as a man of independent property, I shall act in an independent manner.

CONS. You will act like a blockhead as you always do, if you don't follow my instructions.

BONI. Instructions! Ah, bah! A woman instruct me—monstrous!

CONS. Mr. Boniface, it is a matter of life and death. You know travelling is good for your health. You must therefore travel to England, post haste.

BONI. To England?

CONS. To England! Post to Calais—cross the Channel—proceed to London!

BONI. London?

CONS. And whatever happens you must be back by Thursday week.

BONI. But what would be my errand, and to whom?

CONS. That you shall be told as soon as you are ready to start.

BONI. But who will pay the expenses of my journey?

CONS. Those for whom you travel. No less a sum than a hundred louis-d'or will be your reward.

BONI. A hundred? Pooh! My friend, the Cardinal, would give five times the sum; he pays like a prince.

CONS. The Cardinal?

BONI. Yes! *the* Cardinal—my friend Richelieu.

CONS. *Your* friend!

BONI. Yes: my friend. He understands me, I him. I hide no secrets, nothing from him. When I was first taken into his presence, I felt a little alarmed and shaky; but he soon restored me to confidence. We got very friendly in no time. He said I

was a good looking man of my years; had a pretty wife—(so you are, my dear). Asked if you were not in the Queen's service. I told him, Yes. Asked me if we had not lodgers. I answer, Yes. And then, to clench the friendship at once, I told him that the Duke of Buckingham had been staying with us incog, and had only departed this morning.

CONS. You told him that?

BONI. To be sure! If I couldn't trust a Cardinal with such a secret, pray, who ought to know it?

CONS. (*sarcastically*) Well, you are clever; wise—wonderful! brave—and trustworthy! You've played a manly part.

BONI. Of course; and in admiration of my manliness, he gave me three hundred louis-d'or—here they are, (*shews money bag*) and here shall they be placed in safety. (*puts bag in cupboard and locks it putting key in his pocket*)

CONS. How providential that I did not trust him with the Queen's secret.

BONI. There, madam; that's what it is to be a friend of the Cardinal's. But you, a poor foundling, brought up in an asylum, are incapable of appreciating the honor I did you, when I *selected* you for my wife—partly I must confess, that being a foundling, I should have no mother-in-law, nor be troubled with poor relations, as you never had any.

CONS. I am truly sensible of your condescension; and regret that you had not made a wiser choice.

BONI. I am content. Now, my dear, I must know why you want me to go to London.

CONS. I want you to go to London? Nonsense!

BONI. "Nonsense!" But you said so.

CONS. Then I only said so to try how far you really would go to please me.

BONI. Then if I say I will go?

CONS. Then I should say I doubt.

BONI. Then at once, madam, I say, go I will!

CONS. At once, I say, go you need not!

BONI. What is the errand?

CONS. I have none!

BONI. You have——

CONS. (*carelessly*) No!

BONI. There is some mystery here. (*she smiles*) Some secret! (*she shrugs her shoulders and walks about, he following in a passion*) And I'll know it, madam.

CONS. No doubt!

BONI. Will you tell me—eh? Then I'll find it out! or if I can't, my friend the Cardinal shall. So remember! you shall find to your cost, what it is to trifle with a man who has Richelieu for his friend.

Exit L.

CONS. 'Twas well I did not trust him. I, who love the Queen so much, was near betraying her to her worst enemy. My husband, I perceive, is no friend of hers. A mere spy of Richelieu's. Alas, alas! who, now can I trust—who will be my messenger?

D'ARTAGNAN *heard laughing and bidding some one farewell, outside, L. 1 E.*

Ha! 'tis the young cavalier, our new lodger, in company with a musketeer of De Treville's company.

Enter D'ARTAGNAN and ATHOS, L. 1 E.—D'ARTAGNAN bows to CONSTANCE rather confusedly, ATHOS in the most courteous manner; CONSTANCE crosses to L., and acknowledging their politeness, exit 1 E.

ATHOS. (*indifferently*) A pretty woman that.

D'ART. She's the hostess.

ATHOS. (*putting his chair beside table*) A youthful one.

D'ART. That is no fault.

ATHOS. Not if her husband be as young as herself.

D'ART. He's more than twice her age—what is it then?

ATHOS. A crime!

D'ART. On her side? (*getting wine and glasses from side table and putting them, during the above, on table, c.*)

ATHOS. Yes.

D'ART. She—she is the most innocent of women!

ATHOS. (*contemptuously*) Bah! Believe it not. Innocence and youth choose not for their mate penurious age, nor beauty sacrifice itself to what it loathes, without some guilty object.

D'ART. You perhaps have suffered from some woman's wantonness, and judge all alike.

ATHOS. You're a boy. Come, where is this wine? (*D'ARTAGNAN sits R. of table, and fills*) Wine is the only true friend to man: the only one that can bring comfort to the blighted heart, and make the grief-oppressed brain forget its gloom. (*drinks*) Woman: bah! serpents all! More wine! (*fills and drinks*)

D'ART. Serpents? Nay, nay! you could not look upon a face like hers, and say so.

ATHOS. (*bitter'y*) I have seen a face excelling hers—the mask to blackest thoughts and deadliest crimes.

D'ART. All women must not be judged so.

ATHOS. (*drinks again*) No! for all women have not the motive nor the opportunity.

D'ART. I see; some cruel disappointment hath embittered you! Some dagger hath been planted in your heart by woman's hand, and you rather nurse the wound than cure it. Choose for yourself some new beauty; you'll forget the old.

ATHOS. I, in my time, have thought as you do now. I have grown wiser—sadder. (*mournfully*) Sadder!

D'ART. You are wounded—ill—your spirit's faint; try another glass. (*pours one*)

ATHOS. D'Artagnan: I like you—you are—you are frank; my secret is known to Porthos and Aramis, alone. It shall not be hidden from you.

D'ART. Will you show me so much confidence?

ATHOS. I know you to be brave. Treachery is the coward's vice. You have heard speak of the Count d'Arderre?

D'ART. I cannot recall the name.

ATHOS. He was a young noble of Montpellier—the lord of a princely estate. Proud of his unstained ancestry, his spotless fame, and courted for his wealth; he saw through the hollow protestations of the lofty dames with whom he mingled; so quitting Paris and its snares, retired to his domains. A young and lovely girl, accompanying a priest, her brother, became the neighbours of his chateau. The noble caught sight of her in his lonely rambles; and the heart that rebelled against the blandishments of a Court, became the willing captive of the simple villager. He told her of his love, he tempted her in vain; until infatuated by her virtuous constancy, he promised marriage! Think of her delight! Yet, fearful of her brother's doubts; at her request, the promise was kept secret for a time. Soon after this, the brother died suddenly. Picture to yourself, her grief—her tears—her innocence—her unprotected loveliness; begetting warmer sympathy in the young noble's heart, he married her!

D'ART. 'Twas a generous act.

ATHOS. The funeral of so near a relative forbade publicity to the marriage her lover's importunity would not permit to be delayed: when one summer's evening, while riding side by side, her steed threw her. He raised her, stunned and fainting, from the earth; hastily loosened some portion of her dress, to give her air, when to his amazement, marked upon her shoulder—was the flower de luce. She was a branded criminal! A felon!

D'ART. What did her husband?

ATHOS. He gazed upon her prostrate figure for a time, stunned and bewildered. Then came a thought. He prayed that she was dead! But no! Life returned and with it, to him, the knowledge of *her* treachery—*his* disgrace! With returning consciousness, her eye met his. In that glance she saw her deceit was unmasked: she read scorn and loathing in his features: defiance mantled upon hers. A mutual hatred inspired them! She stood before him, alone, in the gloomy forest—beyond the sound of human voice.

D'ART. He did not murder her?

ATHOS. No! Each knew the other's thoughts: she hoped not for mercy nor asked it. For one moment only, she tried to put forth her strength, but in his grasp 'twas vain: into the forest's most untrodden depths he led her. With her horse's trappings bound her tightly to a tree, and when night approached, left her a prey to savage wolves.

D'ART. 'Twas horrible!

ATHOS. 'Twas just! as by the sequel you shall learn. Hastening back to her cottage, he searched her papers; then was the truth revealed.—The pretended priest was not her brother, but her paramour! one St. Quentin by name—like her, a convict. 'Midst other documents, were memorandums of various means of dealing secret deaths. Conviction, too late, dawned within the wronged husband's mind. He had the body of the paramour exhumed; within the skull was found a leaden testimony of his murder! She had poured the molten metal in his ear, as he lay sleeping, and so destroyed the bar to her ambition!

D'ART. A fearful tale! And he, the Count?

ATHOS. He fled.

D'ART. Know you his fate?

ATHOS. Yes: to brood in settled melancholy; shun womankind. His all of life—the bottle and the sword! (*rising from seat*) I am he!—Athos, the Musketeer!

D'ART. You have had good cause for melancholy, truly.

ATHOS. (*recklessly*) More wine! (*pours a glass*) What's life without enjoyment? (*drinks*) Drink, man, drink.

CONSTANCE. (*without, L. 1 E.*) Help! help! Oh, save me!

D'ART. More fun! Wanted again, Bob! What's this?

CONSTANCE *runs in, in terror, L. 1 E., crosses to R.—D'ARTAGNAN and ATHOS advance, C., intercepting a CAPTAIN and four SOLDIERS who run in after her, followed by BONIFACE.*

BONI. That's her! seize her. She's my wife; and, if Richelieu wants her he shall have her.

D'ART. 'Tis false! Fatty! No one shall have her against her will.

CAPTAIN. (*to MEN*) Seize her!

D'ART. At your peril!

(CAPTAIN and SOLDIERS advance to seize her—ATHOS and D'ARTAGNAN attack and drive them off, L. 1 E.—CONSTANCE retreats up stage, R.; BONIFACE lays hold of her, and is dragging her across to L.—D'ARTAGNAN returns, seizes him, throws him round to L. C., dealing him a terrific kick which floors him; he rolls about in great agony.—D'ARTAGNAN flourishes his sword about BONIFACE's head, which dreadfully alarms him)

D'ART. (*his foot on BONIFACE's belly*) Shall I cut his nose off?

CONS. Oh, spare him! spare him!

BONI. (*trembling*) Oh yes, do! Spare me, spare me!

D'ART. For your sake, I do. Rise, Fatty. (BONIFACE, after two or three ineffectual attempts, does so) Begone!

BONIFACE trembles, and is about to exit slowly; D'ARTAGNAN puts his foot up and drives him forward against ATHOS, who re-enters, BONIFACE elings to his wounded arm.

ATHOS. (*with sudden pain and rage*) Dog? My arm! (*gives him a tremendous kick, which sends him flying off, L. 1 E.*)

D'ART. My friend, are we safe? Have you secured the door?

ATHOS. 'Gad no! and they may return. (*looks at D'ARTAGNAN and CONSTANCE, who are together, C.*) Be warned! *Exit, L. 1 E.*

CONS. You are not hurt, not wounded?

D'ART. Not a scratch. What was the cause of your husband's strange conduct?

CONS. Richelieu knowing that I possess the Queen's confidence, wanted to make me a prisoner.

D'ART. But your husband.

CONS. I had nearly betrayed to him my secret.

D'ART. Oh, then husbands ought not at all times to know their wives' secrets?

CONS. (*looks archly at him*) Eh?

D'ART. Do you love that—that (*turning up his nose*) fat gentleman—ah, I see you don't. That's one of the secrets, eh? Why how amongst so many lovers as you must have had, could you have chosen such a—a fat gentleman?

CONS. I never had any other lover but him.

D'ART. Impossible!

CONS. No, indeed. I am a foundling, was brought up in an asylum, and never left it but to come here as his wife.

D'ART. How strange! But you can't have much affection for such an old fat—person, as that?

CONS. He's my husband.

D'ART. That's no odds! Speak the truth—you love some one else better?

CONS. Ah, yes!

D'ART. (*complacently*) May I ask whom? Hem!

CONS. The Queen. I love the Queen best of all the world, she is so kind, so good to me. Don't you love her?

D'ART. Oh, yes, of course, if you do!

CONS. I do, dearly, and would run any risk to serve her. Wouldn't you?

D'ART. For your sake, any!

CONS. No, I should not like you to incur danger; and yet—Oh, sir! I should esteem you above all the world, but her—if—if you——

D'ART. I will then, whatever it is! I swear it, for your sake, for by—I can't say what—I love you, more than ever you can me!

CONS. I hardly know that.

D'ART. I am sure. Now you only love me next to the Queen, I love you (*draws her affectionately to him*) next to myself, and as near as possible.

CONS. (*disengaging herself*) I must not listen to this. The Queen is in great danger;—nay, her life is threatened. In a weak moment she gave to a friend, twelve diamond studs. Richelieu, by some means, appears to be aware of it. At a state ball, to be given on Thursday week, these studs must be worn; or the Queen's error will be discovered; those again in her possession, she can frustrate the machinations of Richelieu, who is her bitterest enemy;—be thou her friend, and I will love thee for ever.

D'ART. You charming little soul! Why didn't you tell me so ten minutes ago, and you should have been a widow.

CONS. Oh, fly to England with all speed! This paper is in the Queen's own writing. Post to London—see the Duke of Buckingham—and fly back upon the wings of light.

D'ART. Of love? But when I return?

CONS. Hasten to the Abbey of St. Sulpice, and remain there till I come to you. I shall learn from watchers the time of your arrival. But on your honor, I charge you deliver the studs, which the Duke will give you, into no hands but mine.

D'ART. I will not fail if life lasts, and Bob is true to me !

CONS. (*takes ring from her finger*) Take this ! 'twas given me by the Queen, and will remind you.

D'ART. Nay, nay, keep your jewel, I want nothing but to hear your kind voice when I come back. Yet (*observing a small black wooden cross hanging from her neck by a black ribbon*) Here is a toy which I will beg from you.

CONS. This ? 'Tis such a trifle !

D'ART. The very thing ; valuable only as a gift from you.

CONS. This little wooden cross was found suspended round my neck when on the steps of Notre Dame, I was abandoned, a helpless babe. The good priest when I left the asylum to come here, blessed it, and told me to wear it always, as by its means I might some day find my parents.

D'ART. Then I withdraw my request !

CONS. But I can lend it you, can I not ? It has been blessed and may preserve you on your journey.

D'ART. You are right ! That and Bob, and on my road I may find your parents for you.

CONS. I have no such hope.

D'ART. Never mind ! If I don't you shall have half of mine.

CONS. Yours ?

D'ART. Yes, they're big enough for both of us.

CONS. (*laughing takes it off, he kneels, she places it round his neck*) 'Tis the only treasure that I prize, but it is freely yours.

D'ART. (*detaining her arms round his neck*) 'Tis very beautiful.

CONS. The workmanship ?

D'ART. No, the sensation.

CONS. Take this handkerchief also. (*the same as in previous Act*) It may gain you immediate audience to the Duke, which might be otherwise denied. (*he takes it*) Now then, you will depart at once.

D'ART. Without further delay ; except one word to Athos.

CONS. Stay ! Have you the means to pursue your journey ?

D'ART. Such as they are.

CONS. In this cupboard are three hundred louis-d'or, could I but open it. (*cupboard in F.*)

D'ART. Permit me. (*strikes panel with his fist, it smashes*) And this money is——

CONS. My husband's.

D'ART. (*hesitating*) Hum ! But——

CON. Given him by Richelieu.

D'ART. Richelieu ?

CON. To betray the Queen.

D'ART. Ah !

CON. And myself.

D'ART. (*pocketing it*) Oh ! then 'tis only capturing the enemy's ammunition.

CON. On Thursday week, at latest, you return ?

D'ART. Fear not. (*CONSTANCE offers her hand, he kisses it passionately*)

CON. Adieu.

D'ART. Farewell. (*about to exit, turns back, embraces and kisses her*) Remember, I'm next to the Queen.

Exit, D'ARTAGNAN, L.; CONSTANCE, R.

SCENE II.—*Exterior of the Sally Port and Landing Place at Calais.*

At L. U. or 3rd entrance an archway raised two or three steps, within the arch is a passage leading off, L. A low wall runs across stage at back, on level with arch. Beyond is the open sea, practicable waters. Flagstaff, R. C. During scene, from commencement, stage gradually grows dark.

Enter CHEVALIER LE TOUR, an effeminate fop, L. 1 E., conducting in
LADY DE WINTER.

LE TOUR. Your ladyship has not made a very long stay in Paris. Could none of our Court gallants induce you to illumine their gay sphere a little longer?

LADY W. Had the Chevalier le Tour been a resident in Paris, I might not now have been at Calais.

LE TOUR. Really your ladyship overpowers me.

LADY W. As I dare not trust myself longer listening to your dangerous compliments; you will pardon me if I at once state the object of my visit—next to the pleasure of meeting you.

LE TOUR. (*aside*) She is a most delightful woman.

LADY W. I am the bearer of this dispatch from Cardinal Richelieu.

LE TOUR. (*raises his hat ceremoniously*) From the minister? and by so fair a hand! (*opens it and reads*) "Give Lady de Winter, the bearer of this, your best assistance to reach England immediately. Seize any other person endeavouring to leave the port (more especially if belonging to the Musketeer Guard whom I suspect) unless bearing a special pass, signed as the enclosed—"Richelieu." And this I presume is the pass. (*reads slip of paper*) "On business of State—let the bearer pass—"Richelieu." Short but concise, truly. I am to understand that your ladyship wishes to sail for England?

LADY W. Without one moment's delay.

LE TOUR. I fear your ladyship will have to remain till morning.

LADY W. Impossible!

LE TOUR. Had your ladyship arrived half an hour sooner, you might have been accommodated.

LADY W. And why not now?

LE TOUR. An English gentleman for whom a vessel has been waiting these three days, but just arrived, and went immediately on board. The ship is this moment weighing anchor.

LADY W. (*aside*) It must be Buckingham. Sir, he is the very person I am hastening to join.

LE TOUR. Rather annoying. Can I not console your ladyship for his absence, until the rising of the tide enables us to float another vessel for you.

LADY W. (*pacing about angrily*) A truce to this folly, sir. Have

you no boat in which I could reach the ship before she starts out to sea?

LE TOUR. Night is advancing, surely you would not venture?

LADY W. I will venture anything, to reach that vessel.

LE TOUR. Your ladyship will bear the risk?

LADY W. Anything rather than delay.

LE TOUR. Ho! Eustace! Moreau! Your ladyship is on a dangerous venture.

LADY W. I am used to danger.

Enter two SOLDIERS through archway, R. U. E.

LE TOUR. (to EUSTACE) You have two small boats belonging to the fort, is either of them seaworthy?

EUSTACE. I doubt it, sir.

LADY W. I am not alarmed!

LE TOUR. Procure two men to row this lady to the English ship now leaving the harbour. Not a moment's delay!

They exeunt through arch, L. U. E.

I trust your ladyship gives me credit for doing my best to serve you?

LADY W. You have done your duty.

Exit after SOLDIERS, L. U. E.

LE TOUR. She is not quite so amiable as I thought. Now what can she want in such a terrible hurry? And with an order from the great man Richelieu. Never mind! Richelieu's secrets are dangerous. A head never sits safely that learns too much of them. Ho, Eustace! A deuce of a woman, truly. Eustace!

Enter EUSTACE, L. U. E., the boat with LADY DE WINTER in it is rowed by two MEN from, L. to R.

Eustace, I have just received strict orders from my friend, Richelieu, that the port is to be closed against any person endeavouring to escape, not bearing an order like this. Now look to this, Eustace, and that we may not be wanting in vigilance, place two extra sentinels at the stair heads.

EUSTACE goes off, R. and returns with two SOLDIERS, they cross and exeunt through archway, L. U. E.

Really mine is a post of considerable more importance than I had believed. It is not quite clear to my mind that Richelieu could find another chevalier in the kingdom to fill it as I do. (he sits carelessly on steps, stage has grown half-dark)

Enter D'ARTAGNAN, hurriedly, L. 1 E.

D'ART. So safe in Calais! If the remainder of my journey is accomplished as prosperously as what's past, I shall be in London before the Duke, I think. I shall return sooner than Constance—Hem! Madame Boniface, can expect. What a pity that she's married. Porthos says, "All the better." I can't see that! Now how am I to get on board a ship? This is the sally part.

Runs up steps, L. U. E. and stumbles over LE TOUR, who jumps up indignantly and arranges his dress.

LE TOUR. Sir! this rudeness.

D'ART. I could not help it, really. (*going*)

LE TOUR. Stay, sir! You have insulted me.

D'ART. (*drawing his sword, and standing on guard*) Make haste, then, for I haven't much time to spare.

LE TOUR. Fight, sir? I'm on guard.

D'ART. So am I.

LE TOUR. I mean, sir, on duty.

D'ART. Then, why don't you say what you mean? (*going*)

LE TOUR. Stay, sir!

D'ART. Bob! (*to LE TOUR*) What the deuce do you want?

LE TOUR. To know your business, sir.

D'ART. That's very impertinent of you.

LE TOUR. Answer me, directly; or I shall place you in arrest.

D'ART. Thank you, I've no time for *a rest* at present.

LE TOUR. I am under the necessity of demanding your purpose here.

D'ART. I want to take ship for England.

LE TOUR. I thought as much. Know you not, sir, that the Guard is doubled, to prevent the escape of any person from this port?

D'ART. Say you so?

LE TOUR. No one quits this place without producing a pass.

D'ART. A pass?

LE TOUR. Like this. (*shows it*)

D'ART. (*passing with sword*) I shall have to give him a pass like *this* in a minute—eh? Bob.

LE TOUR. I see you have not one. Ho!—

D'ART. Stay, sir! You will find I have no need of a pass. (*drawing himself up proudly*) I am one of His Majesty's Musketeer Guards.

LE TOUR. Oh, ho! I suspected as much. You are my prisoner. Ho! Eustace! a guard there!

D'ART. (*seizing him by the throat*) Silence! or you die. (*D'ARTAGNAN puts pistol to his head—LE TOUR trembles violently*)

LE TOUR. You would not murder a gentleman?

D'ART. (*drags him to flagstaff, and hides himself behind it and LE TOUR, still holding pistol to his head*) Ha! the guard approaching! repeat my words; or you are a dead man!

(*four SOLDIERS march on from the interior of arch, and as the first two are about to descend steps*)

D'ART. (*whispers to LE TOUR*) Halt!

LE TOUR. (*in alarm*) Halt! Soldiers, halt!

D'ART. (*to LE TOUR*) Get a boat ready.

LE TOUR. (*to LE TOUR*) Get a boat ready.

D'ART. Right-about-face!

LE TOUR. Right-about-face! (*the SOLDIERS obey*)

D'ART. March! (*LE TOUR, afraid of their absence, hesitates—D'ARTAGNAN gives him a shake*) Quick!

LE TOUR. Quick march!

SOLDIERS return, L. U. E.

D'ART. (*advances*) Your sword. (*LE TOUR gives it*) Your scarf. (*LE TOUR gives it*) Your doublet. (*LE TOUR hesitates*) Quick! (*he*

scrambles it off rapidly—D'ARTAGNAN takes papers from doublet pocket, then fastens the doublet over LE TOUR's head and mouth, with the scarf ties his hands behind him, and with the cords hanging from large flagstaff ties him to it)

D'ART. There, sir; I have taken more trouble with you than I had intended; but, considering your brave and gentlemanly conduct, not so much as you deserve. (*waving the pass*) Now, for England!

He goes up steps and through archway—when he is off, LE TOUR kicks about as though suffocating.

EUSTACE *enters from archway with the pass in his hand, looks around for LE TOUR, at length sees him—he releases him.*

LE TOUR. Where is—is that?— (*EUSTACE shows him the pass*) Stolen, stolen from me, by that—

EUSTACE *runs back to arch, calling* “Guards!”

(*D'ARTAGNAN is seen standing up in boat crossing from L., behind arch to R., rowed by two MEN*)

LE TOUR. (*calling to MEN in boat*) Secure him! Bring him back for your lives!

(*the MEN rise in boat to obey—D'ARTAGNAN thrusts them overboard.—GUARDS run on from arch*)

LE TOUR. Fire! at the villain, fire!

(*GUARDS fire at D'ARTAGNAN; who fires a pistol at LE TOUR; he falls and rolls about the stage.—Alarm bell is rung—D'ARTAGNAN is seen rowing off.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Cabin of the Ship. The flats represent the stern. One of the ports open.*

Enter BUCKINGHAM followed by SEADRIFT.

BUCK. Let the anchor be weighed instantly. Make for any English port the wind is fairest for.

SEA. Your Grace, in five minutes we shall be under weigh for Dover.

Exit, L. 1 E.

The noise of tackle, “Heave oh,” &c. overheard.

BUCK. (*throws himself on couch and looks at casket*) Dearest Anne, and shall I behold you no more? Ah, bright gems, you mock my gloomy thoughts, or does your brilliancy foretel a happier future, and bid me still live on in hope.

A boat is seen to pass the port rowed by two men. LADY DE WINTER is seated in the stern-sheets. A hail is heard outside.

BUCK. (*rises and puts casket open on table*) Another passenger—I am in no mood for interruption.

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

SEA. Your Grace, a lady has come on board, who desires a passage to England. This being the only vessel about to sail, she begs your permission to accompany us.

BUCK. 'Tis unfortunate; but her business may be as urgent as my own. She need not know who I am, so permit her to remain since she is on board; and crowd on all sail.

Exit SEADRIFT, R.

BUCK. To-morrow's dawn will shew me the white cliffs of England, Then come the toils and cares of state again.

Enter SEADRIFT, R. conducting in LADY DE WINTER—he then exits.

LADY W. I am fortunate in being in time to reach your vessel, but unfortunate if my presence is an intrusion.

BUCK. It is impossible that the society of a lady—(*she raises her veil*) Blanche!

LADY W. The Duke of Buckingham! This is indeed a surprise.

BUCK. What ungracious accident could have caused this encounter?

LADY W. What ungracious thoughts can prompt such ungracious words from the polished Villiers.

BUCK. (*pacing angrily*) So unpleasant an interview must not be prolonged. Having discovered by whom your voyage must be accompanied, I trust your ladyship does not intend to pursue it. I will give orders for your boat to be recalled.

LADY W. You must pardon me, it is not my intention to withdraw, for I may not have another opportunity to tell his Grace of Buckingham, of the many, very many obligations I am under to his noble kindness!

BUCK. (*throws himself on seat*) Madam, I know your temper too well to cross it, I am your prisoner and must listen.

LADY W. (*seeing casket intimates that she knows how to proceed*) Your Grace expressed surprise at my being in France. May I ask what brought the prime minister of England so far from his duties? An errand of the heart, eh? Not of politics!

BUCK. At all events, one with which your ladyship can have no concern.

LADY W. Your Grace has made me so much a sharer in your fate, that I know not what affair you can undertake, in which I do not find an interest—

BUCK. In thwarting. I thank you!

LADY W. Does the contemplation of the ruin you have caused, annoy you? 'Twas your pleasure, under a feigned name, and humble position to commence our acquaintanceship, it shall be my care to continue it. You found me obscure and lowly 'tis true, but in the enjoyment of virtue and innocence, orphan that I was. You the disguised deceiver, how did you leave me? Degraded, despised, and homeless!

BUCK. (*rising angrily*) I leave you in possession of this cabin. The deek will——

LADY W. (*intercepting him*) Stay! You shall hear me!

BUCK. (*returns, annoyed*) I know what you would speak of—'tis an oft-repeated tale.

LADY W. An oft-repeated deed of men like you. The wretched vietim of your passions, neglected and remorseful, too often finds a shelter for her sufferings in an early grave. But there are those who think upon their wrongs, as well as on their guilt, and in that heart love has abandoned—remorse being seorned—revenge supplies the place;—for that alone they live, for that they die! Know you not one such?

BUCK. Woman, what would you? The fault of one, was the fault of both.

LADY W. And the punishment of one, should be the punishment of both. Your purpose aecomplished, you fled, and left the village girl to struggle alone against poverty and shame. I came to Paris barefooted and penniless, for weary weeks I sought you, but in vain—I became a mother—burthened as I was, what could I do? Upon the steps of Notre Dame where many a helpless mother had exposed her child before, did I leave mine, to the mercy of the good nuns, who gave it that care I could not.

BUCK. 'Twas not a mother's act.

LADY W. What! do you moralize? Around the infant's neck I hung the only relie I possessed—a little wooden cross, you earved and gave me. (You remember when?—I see you do!) I watched until the babe was borne in safety to the convent hard by: and as its gates elosed for ever between her and me, so elosed my heart for ever against the world. I stood alone, friendless, unpitied: what I endured, I will not tell. Days passed on: at length, passing the Grand Entrance to the Luxembourg, an English noble equipage drew up: I heard announed, aloud, "The Duke of Buckingham." I looked, and in amazement, saw 'twas you. Forgetting for a moment, *my wrongs—your rank*—I sprang past the laequys that surrounded you, and threw myself at your feet. (*with tender remorse*) Ah! George, one kind word would have saved me then. (*resuming her narrative*) Love, for a moment, filled my heart; and I saw only the father of my child. *You*—how did you reeeive me? You *spurned* me: your servants tore me rudely away, and you uttered not a word to proteet me. My brain was maddened, and my whole soul condensed itself to one fell passion—Hatred! You have already felt its power:—its bitterest extreme, you have yet to learn.

BUCK. You have now wealth—station;—cannot these obscure the past?

LADY W. No! How did I obtain them?—by fraud. When spurned by you; I vowed to get by some means within the circle you made more brilliant. I leagued with those who preyed upon the world. Shared their crimes—their fate; and was sentenced to the prison of La Force. What! do you shudder?

BUCK. At your sufferings only.

LADY W. By means of a countryman of yours, I contrived to

learn the English language. Our term of imprisonment past, we left Paris for Montpellier; there, under an assumed name, fortune kindly smiling, I became wealthy; to tell you how, were to place myself in your power, which pardon me I will not do. The convict, my companion, died;—poor fellow! The wealth I acquired has enabled me to cross all your designs hitherto, and so one great object of my life is accomplished.

BUCK. There can be no question of your talent for intrigue. But even your foresight may be overreached.

LADY W. 'Tis just possible—but hardly by your lordship!

BUCK. Woman, be warned! This confession may endanger your liberty.

LADY W. Ha, ha! I fear it not. My liberty was endangered when I was branded as a felon, yet I escaped. My life was endangered when alone at midnight the hungry forest wolves were growling around me. Ha, ha! The fox o'ermatched the wolves. I escaped again, and am in no dread of you.

BUCK. Your journey to London, is to partake in some new plot.

LADY W. No! It is possible my object may be secured without going so far.

BUCK. I may be aiding the very treason I should frustrate. It shall not be. Ho, Seadrift!

LADY W. What would you do?

BUCK. My duty!

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

Attend this lady to her boat.

LADY W. Buckingham!

SEA. The boat left the ship the moment her ladyship stepped on board.

BUCK. Man one of your own, or signal one from shore.

SEA. Instantly, sir.

Exit, R.

LADY W. Buckingham, you will not send me ashore without my own consent.

BUCK. Knowing my danger, I can guard against it.

LADY W. But I intreat!

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

SEA. A gentleman has this instant come alongside and desires to see you—the lady can go back in his boat.

BUCK. *(to her)* Some confederate of yours.

LADY W. Mine!

BUCK. *(to SEADRIFT)* I will not see him.

Exit SEADRIFT, R.

Now, madam, I will conduct you to the boat.

LADY W. I prefer remaining.

BUCK. Your inclination cannot be consulted.

LADY W. Buckingham, you shall repent this.

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

SEA. Sir, the gentleman is rather mad I think; he insists on

seeing you, and desires me to present you this handkerchief, when he says you will not deny him.

LADY W. That handkerchief. Ha! some messenger to warn Buckingham. No time to lose! The studs! *(she goes to table unseen by DUKE and takes two studs, which she displays in triumph, and then conceals them)*

BUCK. *(takes handkerchief)* How could he have obtained it? I will see him. What danger is it that threatens? I must be cautious.

Exit SEADRIFT, R.

Enter D'ARTAGNAN rapidly, R.

D'ART. Have I the honor to address his Grace the Duke of Buckingham?

BUCK. I am the Duke of Buckingham—what is the object of your visit?

D'ART. Your Grace, I am the bearer of a mission that should not be delivered in the presence of a third party.

BUCK. Indeed! Seadrift, conduct this lady to the boat alongside. *(LADY DE WINTER advances down, L., D'ARTAGNAN who is R. sees her face and starts in extacy)*

D'ART. Th—that lady! *(she acknowledges him in the kindest manner, D'ARTAGNAN gets rather confused)*

BUCK. You appear to be acquainted.

D'ART. I—I—your Grace?

LADY W. I have had the pleasure of meeting this gentleman before, but under different circumstances.

D'ART. Yes, that was when I was in my other—hem!

BUCK. *(aside)* Can this man be an accomplice? If so, what can be their motive? Sir, this lady is about to return to Calais, you will accompany her?

D'ART. Alone, and my boat. Oh, lor—yes, to be sure! Your ladyship, I am at your service this instant. *(about to lead her out)*

BUCK. I thought, sir, you had urgent business with me?

D'ART. Your Grace, I had forgotten, 'twill take but one moment.

LADY W. *(aside)* Ha! That youth is inexperienced, his secret shall be mine. I wait, sir! *(endeavouring to entice D'ARTAGNAN to join her)*

D'ART. *(to BUCKINGHAM)* Your Grace, I will return in one moment!

BUCK. Remain, sir! Seadrift, conduct that lady to the boat and let her be set on shore—whatever be their motives they shall be separated!

LADY W. I shall wait the happiness of your rejoining me on deck, sir.

BUCK. That happiness must be denied you then, madam.

LADY W. *(indignantly)* Indeed! *(to BUCKINGHAM)* At least, I shall experience no worse fortune than my rival.

BUCK. Whom?

LADY W. Anne of Austria!

Exit, R.

BUCK. What said she? Anne of Austria? Mysterious woman!

A threat! And yonder man, he looks not like an assassin. However, on board this ship he is my prisoner. Seadrift!

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

BUCK. (*aside to him*) Let two of your men row that lady ashore. Give them means to remain in France, till they can cross in another vessel. Is the anchor weighed?

SEA. It is, sir.

BUCK. Crowd all sail, and put out to sea.

SEA. Aye, aye, sir. But that gentleman——

BUCK. Remains my prisoner.

SEA. Your orders shall be obeyed, sir.

Exit, R.

D'ART. (*looking through port*) There, the beautiful creature is stepping into my boat.

BUCK. Now, sir, your business? quickly.

D'ART. (*advancing, R.*) Pardon me, your Grace, that I forgot it for a moment. This paper may explain. (*takes small slip of paper from his breast. A hole is through it as it has been folded, and one side is stained with blood*)

BUCK. Why, this is stained with blood.

D'ART. I sincerely beg your Grace's pardon, but I could not help it.

BUCK. A hole in it. Are you wounded?

D'ART. (*bowing*) I trust your Grace will pardon *that*, as well.

BUCK. You require assistance.

D'ART. No, your Grace—a bullet merely. It entered without my wish, and went out without my consent. I paid for what I got with interest.

BUCK. (*aside*) Brave, at all events. (*reads*) From the Queen?

D'ART. No, your Grace; from Madame Boniface.

BUCK. The waiting maid of the Queen?

D'ART. The same.

The boat containing LADY DE WINTER, is rowed past the Port by two English SAILORS, from R. to L.

BUCK. Sir, the message you are the bearer of, is most important. Your recognition of the lady who has just left us, and whom I know to be not an enemy of my own merely, but of every person who may take an interest in me, fills me with suspicion. Some danger threatens the Queen, as this leaves no doubt of. But how you should be entrusted with such a secret, is a mystery.

D'ART. I can only attribute it to the favor of Madame Boniface, who's lodger I have the honor to be; and who's husband being a spy of Richelieu's, she dared not trust.

BUCK. She trusts you, then?

D'ART. Hem! until fortune mends, she must!

BUCK. What know you of Lady de Winter?

D'ART. De Winter! Who is she?

BUCK. The lady that has just quitted us.

D'ART. Oh, oh! That is her name, is it?

BUCK. Did you not know it?

D'ART. Neither her nor it—saving that being knocked down on one occasion, she ordered me to be picked up and I felt grateful.

BUCK. She is the Queen's deadliest enemy.

D'ART. Then she is no friend of mine.

BUCK. You love her Majesty?

D'ART. I love her waiting woman better—but Queen or waiting woman, I would betray neither.

BUCK. What proof have I of your faith?

D'ART. That paper! If you want a deeper one 'tis here! (*showing his bloodstained shirt bosom*) For further particulars, enquire within—if more is needed, on this little cross I swear. (*raising it* BUCKINGHAM *checks him, putting his hand on the cross*)

BUCK. I doubt no more. Ha, let me look at that cross. (*looks at it intently*) By heavens it is the same. My own initials. (*looks again*) Yes, it is, it is! From whom did you obtain this?

D'ART. Your Grace must pardon me!

BUCK. Your name?

D'ART. I am called Phillipe D'Artagnan.

BUCK. He cannot be the son of Blanche? No, no! Sir, your possession of that little cross proves you to be the master of my greatest secret. Must I look on you as a friend or an assassin?

D'ART. Assassin! Bob!

BUCK. Sir, 'twas I who carved that little cross. If the tale that I have heard within this hour be true, (and I dare not doubt it), the owner of that cross should be my child!

D'ART. Yours! Your child! Oh, Constance, I have found your father!

BUCK. Constance?

D'ART. The foundling—the wife of Boniface. The cross was found around her neck, when abandoned by her heartless parents. Hem! Mother.

BUCK. No, no, you are right—do not spare me.

D'ART. Oh, sir, return the humble service I have done, and name her Mother.

BUCK. I dare not. Hereafter all may be known, but not now, not now. I may soon return to claim her.

D'ART. (*aside*) What a pity that I am not his Grace's son-in-law.

BUCK. All my doubts of your integrity have vanished. The Queen requires these jewels?

D'ART. To appear in at the State Ball suggested by Richelieu, to entrap her majesty. Trust them to me; and as there is faith in the soul of man, and strength in his free limbs, she shall have them in time.

BUCK. (*taking casket*) They are here.

D'ART. The jewels only. Pardon me, your Grace, but as I shall have to carry them, the casket may be an encumbrance. Your handkerchief may serve.

BUCK. Wisely said.

D'ART. (*taking them out and counting them into BUCKINGHAM'S handkerchief*) Two, four, six, eight, ten. Were there not twelve?

BUCK. Assuredly, twelve! (BUCKINGHAM and D'ARTAGNAN both count aloud again) Two have been abstracted!

D'ART. Impossible!

BUCK. Ha, the thought! That woman; (again she thwarts me). Lady de Winter is an agent of Richelieu's, she has taken them to outwit me and destroy the Queen. What ho, Seadrift! She must be secured at any hazard.

Enter SEADRIFT, R.

Detain that lady!

SEA. 'Tis too late, sir, following your instructions she is by this time on shore.

D'ART. She has the start any how.

BUCK. Man a boat, pursue instantly!

SEA. Sir, there is a strong breeze blowing off shore and we are nearly two miles from land.

BUCK. Oh madness, distraction!

D'ART. Stay, your Grace, there is yet hope, could I but reach Paris in time, I might get two others made so exactly like these as to defeat her object.

BUCK. An admirable thought.

D'ART. There is one slight obstacle.

BUCK. And that is——

D'ART. The means.

BUCK. (*opens desk*) Here are five thousand crowns, and here the ten studs.

D'ART. (*having folded studs in handkerchief, ties it round his waist*) Rest you there. (*and putting roleaux in the pocket of his trunks*) You there.

BUCK. How do you purpose reaching shore?

D'ART. (*throwing off doublet*) I'll show your Grace. I swim like a duck.

BUCK. Should you be lost?

D'ART. Nobody cares. Bob! (*replacing his sword*) No, Bob, I'll never desert you.

BUCK. And the jewels?

D'ART. Let the Queen say I stole them.

He jumps through cabin port. From the time LADY DE WINTER has passed, the water should have been working quicker, and distant panoramic view of Calais move slowly by, giving the idea of the vessel proceeding.

SCENE II.—A room in the "Jolly Miller Tavern." A cupboard in flat.

Enter POUCHET and JACQUES, L. 1 E., who bring on table with four chairs and candles.

POU. Don't complain to me of being worked to death. Now is the time for our harvest. Make hay while the sun shines,

JACQUES. Yes, but the sun don't shine by candle-light, and I want to go to bed.

POU. Bah! Rare times these for publicans. I tell you that the port is ordered to be closed until my lord Cardinal chooses it shall be re-opened. All that are in must stop in, and all that come in will be detained. Nobody in the town will have anything to do but drink.

JACQUES. And no money earning to pay for it.

POU. Then we must be careful how we choose our customers. Let no one enter who has not a good suit on his back, mind you that.

JACQUES. Talking of suits—I wonder if the villain who so damaged Monsieur le Tour's good doublet is caught yet.

POU. No! Monsieur le Tour, ah, a good young man. A pity he was not killed outright.

JACQUES. How so?

POU. Because we should have had a merry-making at the instalment of his successor.

VOICES. (*heard outside, L.*) You can't go in that room!

D'ARTAGNAN. (*outside, L.*) But I will! I'll go into any room in the house! (*more noise*)

POU. What means this?

D'ART. What rascals! Take that—and that! Any more of you?

D'ARTAGNAN *runs in, L., sword in hand—POUCHET and JACQUES run into corner, R.*

Do you oppose me too?

POU. We! Heaven bless your Worship, no!

D'ART. Ha, ha! What, mine Host? You remember me?

JACQUES. 'Tis the madman who broke the crockery!

D'ART. Bring me a flask of wine—your best—prepare a bed for me, your best—and get supper ready—your very best!

POU. Your Excellency forgets that you are somewhat in my debt?

D'ART. Your debt?

POU. For breaking sundry crockery.

JACQUES. And my head!

POU. And being as it were but a stranger, and——

JACQUES. And having as it were no jacket.

D'ART. And a damp shirt. I require some comfort and a good fire and as an earnest that I don't intend to remain in your debt. (*pulls a roleau out of his pocket, chops it in half with his sword, and gives half to POUCHET*) Take that, and pay yourself.

POU. (*astonished*) A prince disguised!

JACQUES. A mad prince.

POU. (*driving him off*) Begone, knave, nor dare to jest with thy betters.

D'ART. Host, do you remember a lady who spoke to me the first morning I called here?

POU. An English woman?

D'ART. The same!

POU. She was here this afternoon, and followed an English cavalier to a small English ship that set sail immediately. My nephew, Jacques, rowed her on board with help, and came back without her.

D'ART. You have heard nothing of her since.

POU. We could not well, considering she is by this time half way to England.

D'ART. Enough!

POU. Quite enough?

D'ART. Eh! Let me know when supper is ready and send in some wine at once.

POUCHET bows and exit, L.

So Lady de Winter has proceeded straight to Paris, well, I must endeavour to outwit her, and journey to Paris as fast as horse can carry me, to-morrow; and having two other studs made to correspond with these, my lord Cardinal, with all his cunning, may be foiled. That pretty woman to be such—hem! I find I have much to learn yet! Madame Boniface; she's pretty too, surely she can't be another of the same kind? I'll swear she's not.

Enter POUCHET, L., with *flagon and glasses, which he puts on table, C.*

D'ART. This is your best?

POU. As I hope for your Honour's countenance.

D'ART. Come, drink—and prove it! (*they both pour out and drink*) Well swallowed—another! (*they sit and drink*) Another yet!

POU. (*aside*) He's a prince—I'll swear it. May I, your Reverence—Highness, I should say, ask why you travel without a doublet?

D'ART. I—I set the fashions in Paris, and people have worn doublets so long that they are getting old. This is the new style.

POU. Pleasant and cheap!

JACQUES running in, L.

JACQUES. Two more travellers, great men, be assured.

POU. Unfortunate, and my best room occupied.

D'ART. Nay, conduct them hither, they are welcome!

POU. I humbly thank your Excellency. He's a baron.

Exeunt with JACQUES, L.

D'ART. (*looking, L.*) It's possible—but that the dress is changed. I'd swear 'twas the very man that laughed at me—but no—this man, a priest, impossible!

Enter RICHELIEU, L. 1 E., dressed as a cavalier, wearing over his doublet the blue velvet surcoat of Rochefort—ROCHEFORT follows dressed as a priest, bowed in by POUCHET.

RICH. To whom are we indebted for this hospitality?

POU. To that gentleman, sir.

ROCHE. Yon gentleman without a doublet! Rather a whimsical costume that, to receive company in, ha, ha!

D'ART. (*aside*) The same voice—the same laugh! Bob, I think you'll be wanted. Yet, let me be wary for once. Gentlemen, welcome!

RICH. Sir, we thank you. (ROCHEFORT *whispers to him*) Indeed! (*looking at D'ARTAGNAN*) So, so, we must sound him. Host, has an English lady arrived here to-day?

D'ART. (*aside*) Birds of a feather! Friends of Richelieu. Caution, D'Artagnan, caution.

POU. Your honor, such a lady has been here to-day, but she has just stepped over to England.

RICH. (*laughing*) Stepped!

POU. At all events, she has gone on board an English vessel.

RICH. Enough. So all goes well.

D'ART. Gentlemen, will you join me?

RICH. With pleasure. Host, we stay here to-night. Let rooms be prepared.

POU. Your Immensity shall be obeyed.

D'ART. And bring another flagon of your best, good company cannot be too well entertained.

POU. Your Majesty shall be obeyed. He's a king.

Exit, R.—all sit at table.

D'ART. Gentlemen, I think we may pass a pleasant evening.

RICH. (R.) I trust so.

D'ART. (C.) What say you to a song? (RICHELIEU and ROCHEFORT *laugh*, D'ARTAGNAN *recognizes the laugh but checks himself*)

RICH. I never sing—my friend perhaps.

D'ART. I'll answer for it he can. 'Tis a saintly occupation.

ROCHE. (L.) I must be excused.

D'ART. Well, then you play! (*to RICHELIEU*) And you too!

ROCHE. The most I can do is to look on.

D'ART. Your friend plays?

RICH. I must decline.

D'ART. Nay, nay, I see you are kept in check by your monastic friend.

RICH. Why——

D'ART. He will pardon you. The great churchman, Richelieu, himself plays—so they say.

RICH. Indeed!

ROCHE. That being the case we can no longer refuse.

D'ART. Host, the wine, there!

Enter POUCHET, with bottles and glasses.

Have you cards and dice in the house?

POU. Both, your Majesty.

D'ART. Bring them instantly.

POU. Yes, your Majesty! He's an emperor.

Exit, R.

D'ART. Fill, gentlemen. (*they fill*) I pledge you! (*he empties his glass they drink but little of theirs*) You fear the wine. Pshaw! 'twill never harm you. Why, even the Cardinal drinks his share. (POUCHET *places cards and dice on table*) Host, let that supper be for three.

POU. Three? Yes, your Reverence! He's a bishop, I'll swear.

Exit, R.

D'ART. (*fills again*) Here's, the King! Come, gentlemen, you must drink that?

RICH. (*filling*) No question, we'll drink that—the King! (*drinks*)

D'ART. (*shuffling cards*) Ah, he's a great card.

ROCHE. What think you of the Queen?

D'ART. The Queen? Bless her Majesty. The Queen? She's Queen of hearts indeed. Here's "The Queen." And may the hand that's raised to injure her be paralysed 'ere it has the power to strike.

RICH. Hem!

ROCHE. I drink "The Queen."

D'ART. Ha, ha! there's one other great personage we ought to toast.

ROCHE. Whom?

D'ART. The Cardinal.

BOTH. The Cardinal—ha, ha, ha! The Cardinal, eh?

ROCHE. How must we call him?

D'ART. No, no, I'll name him. (*draws card*) Here's the Cardinal Richelieu, "The Knave." (*drinks, RICHELIEU and ROCHEFORT look at each other*) We waste time, what do we play for?

RICH. A hundred crowns a game.

D'ART. Zounds, that's high play.

RICH. The Cardinal always plays as high as that.

D'ART. With all my heart. The game?

RICH. Coupé.

D'ART. And such a stake. A man may lose a million in an hour. There's the sum. (*each puts roleaux on table*)

RICH. Cut.

D'ART. (*cutting*) Six!

RICH. (*cutting*) The Queen!

D'ART. (*passing money to RICHELIEU*) The Queen wins—may she always. (*to ROCHEFORT*) Come, sir, join us.

ROCHE. 'Tis against my order.

RICH. The Cardinal will pardon that; you know he plays.

D'ART. Aye, and he's your master. Come, shuffle. (*ROCHEFORT and RICHELIEU exchange glances, all three place money on table*)

ROCHE. Cut.

RICH. Knave!

D'ART. Deuce!

ROCHE. Eight! The Knave wins. (*RICHELIEU gathers money*)

D'ART. *Knave!* you mean the *Cardinal*.

ROCHE. I had forgotten.

D'ART. You don't drink. Is there no other great personage we can toast? Ha, ha, I have it—the great Duke—the Duke of Buckingham.

ROCHE. A foreigner!

D'ART. No matter—he's a great man.

RICH. What shall we call him?

ROCHE. The Ace, I suppose.

D'ART. No, no, we'll not put him before the King. Let us call him the *ten*.

RICH. Ten of what?

D'ART. Ten of Diamonds. (RICHELIEU and ROCHEFORT *exchange glances*) Drink to the Duke. (*drains a glass, they sip theirs*)

ROCHE. (*shuffles cards*) Double the stakes. (*they place money*)

D'ART. (*cuts*) The very card! The ten of Diamonds!

RICH. Two!

ROCHE. The King!

D'ART. Lost again.

RICH. Ha, ha, ha! Your ten was a failure.

D'ART. (*shuffling*) Double again?

RICH. With all my heart. This is a pleasant game.

ROCHE. Three!

D'ART. The Queen! Fortune smiles.

RICH. The King! The Queen's lost this time.

ROCHE. Double again?

D'ART. No, I can go no higher than three thousand that breaks me. (*shuffles*)

ROCHE. Nine!

RICH. Ten!

D'ART. Two! Damnation.

RICH. Ha, ha! Be cool, be cool; you should take these matters coolly. You see the ten's a safer card in some hands than in others.

D'ART. All lost! I am ruined.

ROCHE. Don't be angry—you should take these matters coolly.

RICH. I think he may, as he has no coat on his back. A great gamester, but you have lost this time.

D'ART. (*aside*) By St. Denis I must have a coat. Stay, sir, you have two. I'll play my sword—Bob, I know you won't leave me—against your surcoat; for in a moment of folly I lost my own.

RICH. As you please—cut.

D'ART. (*cuts*) Seven!

RICH. (*cuts*) Five! 'Tis yours—take it.

Enter POUCHET, R.

POU. Your honors, supper is ready.

RICH. Sir——

D'ART. I will join you.

RICH. Ha, ha, which do you prefer, the King, the Queen, or the Cardinal, by this time? *Exit, L. 1 R.*

ROCHE. Come, sir, we shall have a merry night of it—ha, ha, ha! King, Queen, or Knave? *Exit, R.*

D'ART. (*aside, putting hand to handkerchief*) To hold the ten safely is something.

POU. (*bowing*) Sir! they are gone to supper. Do you not join them?

D'ART. (*sharply*) No.

POU. Poor fellow. He's certainly a maniac.

Exit, R.

D'ART. Well I have made a good night's work of this. Ruined myself—disgraced my honor—and destroyed the Queen. Oh! mad infatuation. How can I repair the mischief I have committed?

Shame, disgrace, dishonor! (*paces about*) The ten are safe; but what are they without the others.

JACQUES *runs in*, L. 1 E.

D'ART. What now?

JACQUES. A messenger, splashed to the eyes, must instantly see the gentleman in the blue surcoat.

D'ART. Ah! admit him.

JACQUES. But you are not the——

D'ART. A word and you die. Stay, I'll not trust you. Into that cupboard—quick! (*seizes JACQUES and forces him into cupboard, drawing sword at same time*)

JACQUES. Why, you wouldn't mur—oh! (*D'ARTAGNAN shuts him him—he kicks—D'ARTAGNAN re-opens cupboard*)

D'ART. Another kick, another word, and you are a dead man. (*fastens him in; D'ARTAGNAN puts on the blue surcoat and feeling in the pocket takes from it a slip of paper*) What is this? A single word—"Orleans"—some password, doubtless, that my friend was afraid of forgetting. Ho, there! admit that stranger.

Enter COURIER, L. 1 E.

D'ART. You wished to speak with me?

COURIER. I must first know to whom I deliver my message.

D'ART. You are not ignorant of my name?

COURIER. I was intrusted with no name.

D'ART. (*aside*) That's lucky. You know this dress?

COURIER. By description.

D'ART. Have you ever seen me at "Orleans?"

COURIER. (*recognizing the word*) It is sufficient, sir; I am correct. (*giving letter*)

D'ART. (*reads*) "I have secured the diamond studs and am now posting to Paris. Hasten there, and receive them.—De Winter." You received this from an English lady?

COURIER. My mistress.

D'ART. Ha! Then you may be trusted. Go to the tavern by the side of the landing place at the Fort. Ask for a private room, be seen by no one until I call on you. This may be a thousand louis in your way.

COURIER. (*gratefully*) Oh, sir!

D'ART. No thanks, until you are paid. Hem! your horse is without—no matter, I will have it cared for. Above all, keep yourself concealed, speak to no one, answer no questions, till you see me again. It may be two days, or——

COURIER. Fear not, sir. Be it what time it may, not a soul shall hear a word from me, till I see you again.

Exit, L. 1 E.

D'ART. Then, you'll remain dumb for the rest of your life. So, his secret is mine, his horse is mine, and if the two studs be not mine, may D'Artagnan sleep to-morrow without his head.

Exit, L. 1 E.

SCENE III.—*Practical House in Flat.—A portion of Street.*

Enter PORTHOS and ARAMIS, R. 1 E., dressed alike, in the magnificent State Uniform of the Musketeer Guard.

PORT. Powers of all potent wine! but this will be a glorious night!

ARAMIS. Aye, for those who can mingle in the sports; but to us, who are unfortunately called to duty, 'tis very irksome.

PORT. Speed of Mereury! what can be the reason that the State Ball is to take place so much earlier than was originally announced?

ARAMIS. To serve some purpose of that arch fox, Richelieu, doubtless: but so much sooner than was anticipated, having taken so many unprepared, must of necessity diminish its lustre.

PORT. Ha, ha! Cream of all Cunning! but I do divine a cause.

ARAMIS. Indeed!

PORT. Yes; 'tis to cross me. Knowing 'twas my turn for guard to-night, he has contrived to thwart my meeting with my little Duchess, who must needs attend.

ARAMIS. Porthos, Porthos! has thy vanity no bounds? Your Duchess! bah! Had he known how he was disappointing my little Countess, he might have postponed it.

PORT. She'll be at the ball?

ARAMIS. Doubtless!

PORT. Point her out to me.

ARAMIS. After having seen your Duchess—I agree.

PORT. (*aside*) A shrewd dog. But, Clues of Ariadne! where shall we find our new friend, D'Artagnan? What would De Treville say, were he to be absent from his first State duty?

ARAMIS. Athos is seeking him, and will, doubtless, inform him should he return to Paris in time.

PORT. Soft! Who comes here?—Officers of justice! What raseally work's afoot now?

ARAMIS. I pine for amusement. We'll watch and see. (*they hide, L.*)

Enter BONIFACE, R., followed by four OFFICERS.

BONI. Hush! this is the house in which I was told I should find my wife awaiting for D'Artagnan. It's not for me to say for what purpose; but she's a practiser of treason, so it's for no good, be assured. I have a key. There's only one man and my wife, so don't be alarmed; though he's a very devil is this D'Artagnan.

All go into house cautiously.

ARAMIS. (*to PORTHOS, who also advances*) Is it possible! Can D'Artagnan be here? (*as they are about to follow cautiously, a shriek is heard within.*)

CONSTANCE is dragged out by OFFICERS.

ARAMIS. A woman! Forbear!

He rescues CONSTANCE, and attacks two of the OFFICERS—

CONSTANCE runs off, R. 1 E., ARAMIS beats two OFFICERS off, L.

1 E., PORTHOS fights the other two, one of whom knocks him on

the head, he reels stunned towards door, his sword extended and pins BONIFACE to the wall as he is about to come from the house.

OFFICER. Ha! she is there, follow and we have her.

The two OFFICERS run off in pursuit of CONSTANCE, R. 1 E., ARAMIS returns, sees BONIFACE writhing against door post, ARAMIS pulls PORTHOS away from BONIFACE, who falls inside the house—PORTHOS cautiously closes the door.

PORT. Body of Bacehus; but I have slain a fatted calf!

ARAMIS. Porthos, you have made Madame Boniface a widow.

PORT. Tears of all the crocodiles! Then D'Artagnan, must console her—but is she safe?

ARAMIS. Let us haste to find him. I hate these broils, there is no glory in them.

PORT. And eyes of Venus, what will my duchess say?

They exeunt, R. 1 E.

SCENE IV.—*Dark Chamber, with large folding doors, C., supposed to be some height from the ground. Balcony beyond window, backed by moonlight, sky, or garden, a lamp hangs, C.*

ATHOS follows D'ARTAGNAN who enters cautiously by the balcony.

ATHOS. You see there is no one here. Madman, you must return with me, the guard is already mustered, and for you to be absent were an eternal disgrace.

D'ART. Happen what may, my present venture must be accomplished.

ATHOS. I am answerable for you. You would not shame your friend, yourself?

D'ART. Athos, I can suffer no shame, no disgrace equal to a defeat of my present scheme.

ATHOS. Bah! 'Tis to meet a woman.

D'ART. Granted!

ATHOS. And you neglect the call of honor.

D'ART. You will know me better. 'Tis now nine, give me till a quarter past—if I rejoin you not, 'tis death alone that stays me.

ATHOS. Well, well, I shall watch the portal till you leave, and there rejoin you. A woman! Madman! *Exit at balcony off, L.*

D'ART. Now, Lady de Winter, if you are punctual and have still the diamonds in your possession, they must be mine. I would it were a man I had to deal with, instead of a woman; but, Bob, you are of no use here. *(listens)* I hear nothing but the guard of Richelieu's men pacing below. I'm in the lion's mouth indeed! Oh, if my poor old father and mother only knew of the serapes I get in, and the way I get out, how proud they would be; hark! *(L.C.)*

Enter LADY DE WINTER, dressed for the state ball, with the addition of a mantle, L. 1 E.

LADY W. My dear Rochefort, you here! they never told me of your arrival, in the hall. I received your note and hastened to meet you. Here are the trinkets that have given me this world of

trouble. (*with his back to her, he impatiently stretches forth his hand*) Stay, stay, my dear friend; where is the sum his Eminence promised?

D'ART. (*aside*) What an unlucky devil I am. Had I never seen those cards now.

LADY W. You are silent—you have not the gold—then I retain the jewels.

D'ART. (*forgetting his assumed character*) You shall be paid any sum.

LADY W. (*surprised*) A stranger?

D'ART. No—not—I mean I'm not the gentleman you named.

LADY W. I am aware of it, fortunately, in time.

D'ART. But I shall do just as well.

LADY W. Sir!

D'ART. I mean—you remember me you know—on board the ship—on the ground.

LADY W. Ha, ha, perfectly! (*aside*) A fortunate escape! Had I entrusted the studs to him, I had been fairly duped.

D'ART. Well, then, shan't I do as well as this gentleman?

LADY W. For what purpose?

D'ART. To take the two studs to Richelieu.

LADY W. You know of the affair then?

D'ART. Of course!

LADY W. And would deliver them safely?

D'ART. Upon my word I would.

LADY W. And what security have I, that I shall receive the sum promised?

D'ART. I would not give them up till I obtained it.

LADY W. I act upon the same maxim.

D'ART. But this is the very time! the hour the gems are wanted.

LADY W. By two parties. You see I know all.

D'ART. (*affecting sentiment*) Lady! have you no compassion?

LADY W. Compassion!

D'ART. (*kneeling at her feet*) Have you no love?

LADY W. (*pretending to yield*) Love! Should I confess?

D'ART. (*aside*) She's going to confess she loves me.

LADY W. But men are so heartless: and you care not for me.

D'ART. No! who could help it? I adore you!

LADY W. And none other?

D'ART. None, but you. (*aside*) I wonder if she'll give them up.

LADY W. (*catching sight of the riband round his neck, and pretending jealousy*) Ha, deceiver! you would betray my poor woman's heart, and then laugh at me.

D'ART. (*tenderly*) Nay, I swear.

LADY W. Fie! cruel man; and a love pledge from another round your neck.

D'ART. This: 'tis but the loan of a poor orphan girl.

LADY W. Some Court dame.

D'ART. (*aside*) I don't think I ought to tell, but I must have the jewels. (*to her*) From a poor foundling, who was abandoned on the steps of Notre Dame, in infancy; and I being the first man, I

mean, the first gentleman she ever was acquainted with, lent it to me as a charm merely.

LADY W. How strange the coincidence. I would see it, and yet I fear to ask.

D'ART. A little wooden cross merely.

LADY W. Let me examine it.

D'ART. (*aside*) She's jealous. 'Tis of no value.

LADY W. I must see it.

D'ART. There! (*as she examines it, he says "G. V."*)

LADY W. (*appears overcome with emotion for a moment, then recovering, with earnest feeling enquires*) Where obtained you that amulet? Say, does she live that gave it you?

D'ART. She does.

LADY W. Oh, where shall I behold her? tell me, I entreat.

D'ART. Your motive for asking?

LADY W. Seek not to know. Where is she?

D'ART. I might, by revealing, place her in the power of an enemy.

LADY W. (*with feeling*) An enemy? no, no! Oh, sir, she is my child.

D'ART. Your child! (*aside*) Constance, I have found your mother. (*to her*) You then, are the Duchess of——

LADY W. Silence! you know too much already. Let me see her.

D'ART. (*with sudden thought*) On one condition. Those studs.

LADY W. Name some other terms.

D'ART. You know the Queen's danger. Save her, and I will restore to you your daughter.

LADY W. My promise. Richelieu!

D'ART. Do you love Richelieu better than your child?

LADY W. I love revenge, better than both. In the love of Buckingham, the Queen has outrivalled me. In all the darkness of my gloomy life, but one ray of light has illuminated my path. Revenge! And now that it shines bright before me, shall I obscure the precious beam? No! Death, destruction, may overwhelm me, but let me enjoy this one triumph, and I die the conquerer.

D'ART. Shall I let the prize escape me, when so near attained? Woman, forego your purpose; let mercy supply the place of malice, save the Queen, restore the jewels.

LADY W. (*shewing them*) Part with these—and to you? Sooner would I part with life.

D'ART. (*suddenly snatches them*) They are mine.

LADY W. Help, help, help!

D'ARTAGNAN is rushing out, L. 1 E., when ROCHEFORT and two

SOLDIERS enter; he dashes between and past them out, L. 1 E.

LADY W. He has the studs.

ROCHE. Fire upon him. (*the SOLDIERS fire*) He staggers towards the door; he is struck; he falls. *Exit after him.*

LADY W. From this window I can see if he escapes.

Advances quickly to the window, as ATHOS having heard the firing is about to enter by it; they meet face to face she shrieks and

recoils. ATHOS *stands bewildered for a moment, then recognizes her.*

ATHOS. Blanche! alive!

LADY W. Count d'Arderre?

ATHOS. Murderess! (*seizes her wrist*)

LADY W. Oh, spare me, spare me!

ATHOS. Spare! spare! To curse the rest of human kind? To crush more hearts? To blight more lives? No, I spare no more!

LADY W. And must I die? (*assuming affection*) By your hand, yours? (*he averts his head*) Ah, d'Arderre, you have not the heart to slay me.

ATHOS. True! The public headsman is the more fitting executioner.

LADY W. You would not have the world know my confession?

ATHOS. You can disgrace me no further—justice claims you.

LADY W. In my own hands then I have the power to escape the executioner. (*shews phial*) Behold! (*he turns to look*) You yet will spare me?

ATHOS. Never! Come——

LADY W. Have you no pity?

ATHOS. None!

LADY W. (*throwing the contents of the phial in his face*) Nor I!

Runs off, L. 1 E., ATHOS blinded, reels and staggers with pain.

ATHOS. Wretch, monster, ho, there! Oh, agony! (*grotes his way to window and reels out by balcony*)

SCENE V.—*Anti-chamber in the Palace.*

Enter QUEEN in great agitation, R., attired for the ball.

QUEEN. Oh, for the power that Joshua had of old, to stay these fleeting hours. The time of trial has come, but not the means to save me. Oh, weakness! why in a moment of infatuation have I endangered the fame of a faultless life—and placed a weapon in Richelieu's hand wherewith to slay me.

Enter PAGE, L. 1 E.

PAGE. May it please your Majesty, the King, desires your presence.

QUEEN. I attend.

Exit PAGE, L.

Why does not Constance return? She has failed to recover the jewels, and fears to tell me so, or the Cardinal's spies have watched, and perhaps detained her. (*listens*) I hear—yes, 'tis her footsteps.

CONSTANCE hurries in, R. 1 E.

Well, well, girl, you have them? Your pallid cheek—your looks averted—tell me that the faint straw I grasped at has sunk, and left me hopeless.

CONS. How can I answer? I waited till the latest moment, and——

QUEEN. The messenger you trusted came not. Traitor!

CONS. Madam, I doubt his good fortune, more than his honor. As the clock struck, I heard a footstep; the door opened. I flew to meet him, when instead of him, I encountered my husband, and a band of armed men. Alarmed, I tried to evade them, and fled. Some unknown hand stayed my pursuers. I dare not stay to look behind me, but hither flew, to bring this most unwelcome truth. We have failed.

QUEEN. Failed! I dare not hear the word. Every moment is an age of dear-bought existence. Speed you back, he may yet come.

CONS. The meeting place suspected, it is no doubt surrounded by Richelieu's men.

QUEEN. True, and to be seen there were to be captured. Know you his friends—his home? Once more, dear Constance, strive to aid me: success may yet reward you. I will delay till you return.

CONS. Dear mistress, my life is yours!

QUEEN. My honor, yours!

Exit CONSTANCE, R. 1 E.

Ye blessed saints! who when in mortal form, felt mortal sufferings, have pity upon mine.

Enter PAGE, L. 1 E.

PAGE. Your Majesty! the King grows impatient of your long delay.

QUEEN. My ladies!

PAGE crosses to R. and exits.

Oh, for some accident! Nay, I could pray for death, rather than the public shame that threatens. Oh, Buckingham, Buckingham! why did I ever meet you?

Enter RICHELIEU, in state robes, L. 1 E.

RICH. May it please your Majesty; the King, grown angry at your absence, deposes me to conduct you to the Ball.

QUEEN. (*proudly*) The entertainment being for my pleasure, his Majesty should not feel annoyed at waiting my convenience.

RICH. The King is desirous of seeing your attire sparkling with the jewels he presented to you.

QUEEN. 'Tis something new, to find a churchman take such interest in a lady's toilette.

RICH. (*with double meaning*) What can your Majesty say or do that Richelieu does not feel an interest in?

QUEEN. (*haughtily*) Sir?

RICH. (*threateningly*) And you know the King's weakness of temper. He sets such a value on those studs of *yours*—that their concealment, exchange, or loss, might ruin you.

QUEEN. Ruin me! (*contemptuously*)

RICH. Even you. Shall I be so bold as tell your Majesty, that the King scarcely values your head, at more than those jewels; and much I fear, to lose the one were to endanger the other.

QUEEN. Dare you threaten?

RICH. (*changing his manner*) I would rather entreat than threaten—were not Anne of Austria's heart so cold.

QUEEN. (*aside*) Surely 'tis time the girl returned. Oh, fatal delay!

RICH. But I am forgetting his Majesty's commands. I must conduct you to him.

QUEEN. Sir, I choose my own escort, and must dispense with yours. My ladies!

Enter LADIES, with PAGE, R.

RICH. Shall I announce your Majesty?

QUEEN. You know your duty, I my station.

(*she waves him off contemptuously; he looks maliciously at her, then smiling, as sure of victory—exit L. 1 E. When he is off*

QUEEN looks anxiously back to R, clasping her hands)

QUEEN. (*aside*) Constance, my only friend, heaven speed thee!

Exit, followed by LADIES, L. 1 E.

SCENE VI.—*Magnificent Saloon, brilliantly illuminated.*

COURTIER and LADIES parading. Band heard in distant rooms.

PAGES are going to and fro. Grand flourish. The KING enters down C., from L. U. E., preceded by two PAGES, who bow him on, and remain on either side of C. arches. The GUESTS make way, R. and L., and all bow as he advances. ROCHEFORT follows the KING.

KING. Well, Rochefort, what say you; does our palace deserve the name of prison, as I hear it bears?

ROCHE. Your Majesty's calumniators, would shrink abashed, were they but witnesses of your state.

KING. You have travelled. Is our Court worthy the foreign dames, who honor it with their presence to-night?

ROCHE. Who could say otherwise!

KING. Egad—did her Majesty but know what pains we take to win her smiles, methinks she would not be so tardy. I am in such high spirits to-night, that I could almost forgive her coldness and haste to summon her myself—eh!

ROCHE. Her Majesty's coldness must disappear before your Majesty's genial warmth. Sire, the Cardinal approaches.

Enter RICHELIEU, R. U. E.

KING. Well, Cardinal, where is your fair charge?

RICH. Your Majesty, I but precede her.

KING. 'Tis well. (*he saunters round the room addressing one or two of the LADIES*)

RICH. (*anxiously to ROCHEFORT*) Well, Rochefort, the studs! the jewels! Have you them?

ROCHE. I hastened to meet Lady de Winter, but reached the place appointed only in time to see them torn from her, by the ruffian we met in Calais.

RICH. (*enraged*) They are not lost!

ROCHE. I arrived at the moment he was escaping with his prize.

RICH. (*anxiously*) Well, Rochefort, well!

ROCHE. Unable to arrest his steps, we fired on him; he fell.

RICH. And you secured the diamonds, eh?

ROCHE. The hand being shattered that held them, the jewels fell to the ground. Having regained them, Lady de Winter will entrust them to no one but yourself.

RICH. Good, good! Bring her hither, good Rochefort. Ha, ha, ha! the Queen must fall. She has thwarted me too long—ha, ha! 'tis time.

PAGE. (*advances, R. U. E.*) "The Queen."

The QUEEN enters, R. U. E. attended by her LADIES—KING advances to meet her, C., and comes towards front with her.

KING. Welcome, my beauteous Anne! (*QUEEN throughout the scene betrays anxiety*)

RICH. Thrice welcome, your Majesty; excelling not only in rank, but beauty!

QUEEN. My lord Cardinal has laid aside the churchman for the courtier!

KING. You don't know all the elegant courtesies his Eminence is capable of.

QUEEN. (*pointedly*) 'Tis not long since I had some experience of his excessive politeness.

RICH. (*sarcastically*) Your Majesty should remember, every minister of state cannot have the polish of a Buckingham.

QUEEN. True—nor the person!

KING. Ha, ha, ha! My Lord Cardinal, you see you are no match for the Queen.

RICH. (*aside*) We shall try presently. What can detain Rochefort?

KING. (*to QUEEN*) Will you pass through the rooms?

QUEEN. With all my heart. (*aside*) The girl returns not, and by his smile, I know that I am sacrificed. (*going up with KING*)

RICH. (*looking off, L.*) Ha! he comes! Rochefort, quick! quick!

ROCHEFORT conducts in LADY DE WINTER, L. 1 E.

Now, the studs, have you them?

LADY W. (*giving them*) They are here.

RICH. Lady, I am your debtor for life. You shall now see your revenge on Buckingham—mine on the Queen, accomplished.

KING. (*up stage with QUEEN*) Partners, partners! Her Majesty would tread a measure. (*all are preparing for the dance*)

RICH. May it please your Majesty; a word in your gracious ear.

QUEEN. (*aside*) 'Tis to remind him of the studs. How to delay him. (*detaining the KING as he is about to advance to RICHELIEU*) Your Majesty; after the dance.

KING. Right! My lord, when this measure is over, we will hear you.

RICH. At once, your Majesty.

QUEEN. (*gently leading him back*) Your gallantry. Must I be neglected?

KING. (*gallantly*) The Queen rules to-night : we must obey.

RICH. 'Tis of her Majesty that I would speak.

KING. (*to her*) Some new surprise to please you, doubtless. Your Majesty will pardon me. (*goes to RICHELIEU, L. C.*)

QUEEN. (*aside*) The hour is come ! and Lady de Winter here, to witness my disgrace.—I dare not speak to her.

RICH. (*to KING*) Has your Majesty forgotten the conditions on which this Ball was given ?

KING. Conditions ! (*recollecting*) You remind me : the diamond studs——

RICH. Which the Queen does *not* wear.

KING. Is't possible ? Ho ! silence, there ! (*music ceases*) Stir not—speak not ! (*the PROMENADERS suddenly stop and group round back of stage—looking in anxious surprise at the Principals, who are in front*)

QUEEN. (*advancing, R.*) What means this ?

KING. Madam, you shall know : the jewels that were to adorn you this night, you have neglected to wear ; I would know the reason ?

QUEEN. (*in trepidation*) Your Majesty ; is this a time or place for such a question ?—After the dance.

RICH. (*to KING*) She prevaricates.

KING. I demand an instant answer.

QUEEN. I am a Queen, and will not be interrogated.

KING. No evasion—where are they ?

QUEEN. Must I be questioned like a criminal ?

KING. (*enraged*) A guard there ! Answer me—where are they ?

QUEEN. Where should they be ?

RICH. (*openly accusing her*) Or rather say, where should they not be. (*QUEEN staggers to arm chair, R. C.*) Her Majesty is unwell, let me answer for her. They should not be in the possession of the Duke of Buckingham, as they now are—worn doubtless to the surprise of the English court and dishonour of ours.

KING. Oh, treason ! My lord Cardinal, know you what you say ? You have no proof of such monstrous guilt.

RICH. (*showing two studs given him by LADY DE WINTER*) Behold my evidence ! These two taken from the Duke's own hands.

KING. By whom ?

RICH. (*presenting LADY DE WINTER*) Lady de Winter, who this day arrived from England !

QUEEN. (*aside*) The very woman that I trusted most. I have no friend—I doubt e'en Constance, now.

KING. (*with emotion*) Her guilt is too clear. Stand from around her. Anne of Austria, have you no word to say !

QUEEN. (*overwhelmed*) None !

KING. You confess then ?——

QUEEN. Nothing ! The Cardinal would destroy me, his purpose is accomplished.

RICH. My only motive was to serve my Royal Master.

KING. What should be her punishment, who false to her oath, forgetful of her honor, betrays her husband, and her king ?

RICH. That wise king, Henry of England, is the only royal example I can quote. His wife betrayed him not a second time.

KING. His was an example we do not scorn to imitate; and yet—what say you, Richelieu?

RICH. (*hypocritically*) I—I cannot answer, I cannot plead for her forfeit life? Justice forbids.

KING. Be death the penalty of her crime! (*all appear to recoil, and in a half-whisper ejaculate "Death"*) Ho there! A guard!

ATHOS, PORTHOS, ARAMIS, D'ARTAGNAN, and OTHERS, *march on, c. from R., in the magnificent state costume of the Musketeer Guard.*

LADY DE WINTER *remains in L. corner.*

The Queen is your prisoner, away with her to the tower of Nesle!

(D'ARTAGNAN, whose hand is bound up in Buckingham's handkerchief, the corner hanging down and slightly bloodstained, advances to left of chair in which QUEEN is sitting—ARAMIS advancing on the other side of chair, D'ARTAGNAN places his wounded hand on the Queen's wrist, she rises indignantly from chair and looks in his face with a glance of defiance, he meets her gaze steadily, and slowly looking down to his hand, she follows his glance and recognizes the handkerchief, they instantly exchange a glance of intelligence, and with a confident air waives them off.)

QUEEN. (R. C.) I am Queen of France; who is my accuser? Is it you, my lord Cardinal; you, whose mission should be of mercy and forgiveness. I throw back the hateful calumny upon my honor and accuse you, ay you! and charge you with most foul conspiracy, not only against me, but against his Majesty, the King.

RICH. (L. C.) Too slight a subterfuge and somewhat late. As you say, madam, my mission is of mercy. I accuse you not. (*shows studs*) But these are merciless witnesses——

QUEEN. Of my innocence, stolen as they have been by some agent of your own. Can your Majesty be the dupe of so shallow an artifice? Can you forget, that you saw that woman, so short a time since in my chamber, that it is impossible she could have been to London and back by now?

KING. By St. Denis! I remember. 'Tis true.

RICH. (*aside*) Malediction! I have overreached myself. (*recovering his self-possession*) If so where then are the other ten studs?

QUEEN. (*rapidly glances at D'ARTAGNAN who assures her*) In my cabinet.

RICH. (*looks at LADY DE WINTER, who implies " 'Tis not so"*) If her Majesty will deign to produce them, all doubts will be removed. (*QUEEN turns towards back*)

KING. Stay! Let no one move. I myself will search.

Exit, R. U. E.

QUEEN. (*scornfully*) A royal office, truly. (*casts a look of contempt at RICHELIEU and then turning unseen by him to D'ARTAGNAN enquires anxiously*) You have not deceived me?

RICH. (*aside*) What juggling is this? She cannot have recovered them.

D'ART. I think the Queen wins this time. (RICHELIEU *starts*)

KING *returns enraged.*

KING. Madam, this is some paltry excuse to escape the doom you so well deserve. You know your cabinet does not contain the gems.

RICH. (*confidently*) I told your Majesty.

CONSTANCE *runs in, R. U. E., down C., kneels, presenting the ten studs, without casket, to KING.*

CONS. Are these the studs your Majesty requires?

KING. The same, by St. Denis. My rage must have blinded me. (*the QUEEN clasps her hands in thankfulness*)

RICH. (*enraged, aside*) A million tortures!

D'ART. (*aside to RICHELIEU*) My ten of diamonds has beaten your two.

QUEEN. (R. C.) Is your Majesty convinced?

KING. (*approaching her*) Oh! pardon me; I yet will make amends. My Lord Cardinal, why have you dared to trifle with us thus?

RICH. (*apologetically*) I—I——

KING. Who is this dishonest woman that has dared to plot against our consort?

ATHOS. (*advancing from MUSKETEERS, with a shade before his eyes*) Your Majesty, let me answer that. (LADY DE WINTER *utters a shriek, and recoils from him*)

KING and RICH. (*looking from ATHOS to LADY DE WINTER*) You! —Lady de Winter!

ATHOS. Not Lady de Winter; but a spy of his Eminence the Cardinal's; Blanche de Brugnonne; Countess d'Arderre; a branded felon; the murderer of St. Quentin; and the mother of that girl, whom she deserted.

KING. And you are?——

ATHOS. Her deceived, disgraced husband. (*goes, R.*)

LADY W. The husband that I wronged! the child that I abandoned—confirm my downfall.

KING. She shall be punished.

CONS. (*throwing herself at QUEEN's feet*) Ah, madam, forgive—protect her—she is my mother!

QUEEN. (*to KING*) For my sake, spare her. (*entreats KING*)

LADY W. My child! and now she prays for me. Lead me to prison—where you will: there is no punishment can equal this.

KING. (*to ATHOS*) Name you the penalty of her guilt.

ATHOS. (R. corner) Let the cloister be her jail, her conscience her accuser, and remorse her penance.

KING. Be it so: Hence with her!

She is led off by two of the MUSKETEERS, L. 1 E.
Rochefort! if your head be seen within our kingdom after sunrise, 'twill be to ornament our city's gates.

ROCHE. (*bows, and aside*) Damnation!

D'ART. (L., *aside to him*) "Be cool, be cool! You should take these matters coolly." (ROCHEFORT *eyes him*)

PORTHOS *advances with two MUSKETEERS, who escort ROCHEFORT off*—PORTHOS *remains*.

PORT. (*to D'ARTAGNAN*) Your fair hostess is a widow. Shall I tell her?

D'ART. Not now.

KING. My lord Cardinal, your absence from Court will need no excuse for the future. (*goes up c., as RICHELIEU bows abjectedly*)

D'ART. (*aside to him*) Your Eminence, the Queen has won. You're a great gamester, but you have lost this time.

CARDINAL *eyes him scornfully, and exits proudly*, L. 1 E.

KING. (C., *to QUEEN*) Let me restore these gems.

QUEEN. Now doubly bright! A token of your forgiveness.

KING. But be more careful of them for the future.

D'ART. } Hem!

ATHOS. }

D'ART. Bob, you may rest quiet now! But be ever ready to leap forth in defence of woman's fame.

ATHOS. And the honor of the Musketeers! (*grand flourish*)

Curtain.

COSTUMES.

Period—Louis XIII, 1625.

KING.—*First Dress*: Black velvet doublet, open sleeves, showing white under sleeve and full shirt at waist, full trunks wide and loose at the knees, black circular cloak with star, broad sword belt and sword, large lace collar, black morocco bucket boots with point lace tops, full ringlet wig, moustache curling upwards, and imperial, hat and feathers. *Second Dress*: Splendid crimson and gold lace doublet and trunks, purple velvet cloak, purple velvet and ermine cap.

RICHELIEU.—*First Dress*: Scarlet robe with small red buttons down the front, scarlet caul cap, small white ermine cape, blue ribbon and silver cross, iron grey hair, moustache and imperial, vandyck cuffs. *Second Dress*: Puce velvet travelling suit, blue velvet surcoat trimmed with silver, boots, spurs, slouch hat. *Third Dress*: Same as first, with scarlet mantle.

BUCKINGHAM.—Purple velvet doublet with row of jewelled buttons down the front, white satin aiguettes at shoulders, white satin breeches, purple leather high boots, Spanish hat and feather, moustache and imperial, long hair, plain travelling cloak.

ROCHEFORT.—*First Dress*: Richly trimmed doublet (showing shirt at waist), doublet and trunks, slouch hat and feather, riding boots and cloak, black hair, and pale face.

DE TREVILLE.—Crimson and gold doublet, trunks, and cloak, steel gorget, grey hair, &c., hat and feathers.

ATHOS.—Light blue coat, gilt buttons down the front, aiguillettes of gold lace, broad sword belt and long rapier, high boots, slouch hat and feather. *Second Dress*: Handsome scarlet slashed with blue, steel cuirass and morion, moustache and beard, pale features and dejected air.

PORTHOS.—*First Dress*: "Tight blue jacket, rather faded and worn, over which hung a splendid shoulder belt embroidered with gold, a long crimson mantle fell gracefully over his shoulders, exposing to view the costly belt, to which was appended a rapier of gigantic length." *Second Dress*: Same as Athos.

ARAMIS.—"A young man about twenty or twenty-two, with a mild ingenuous aspect, eyes dark and tender, his thin moustachios formed above his upper lip a perfect arch. It was his mood to speak but seldom and slowly, to bow frequently, to laugh silently, and so as to exhibit his small white teeth, of which, as well as of his whole person, he seemed to take particular care." *First and Second Dress*: Same as Athos.

D'ARTAGNAN.—*First Dress*: Maroon doublet with buff leather sleeves open in front, showing shirt at girdle, brown full trunks, maroon tights, brown silk garters (below the knee), ends hanging down, white cloth cap, long rapier, buff shoes and spurs, large brown cloak, small plain collar to shirt. *Second Dress*: Blue over coat. *Third Dress*: Full uniform of the Musketeers, same as Athos, &c.

BONIFACE.—Full tunic of brown cloth, with open sleeves, showing yellow under sleeve, yellow vest and stockings, brown full trunks, shoes, grey scalp wig, and plain trencher cap.

POUCHET.—Drab vest and trunks, grey stockings, shirt sleeves, white apron, shoes, red cap.

LE TOUR.—Slate coloured tunic and trunks, boots, gorget and sash, long hair, slouch hat.

SEADRIFT.—Blue frock and trunks, grey stockings, buff shoes.

JACQUES.—Blouse and plain trunks, grey stockings, and shoes.

PEASANTS.—Blouses, plain doublets, &c.

COURIER.—Plain riding coat, slouch hat, high boots, spurs, and whip.

ANNE.—*First dress*: Pink satin under dress, short waisted open dress jewelled and embroidered, open sleeves shewing pink under sleeves, rich lace collar falling over the shoulders, small curls round the forehead, ringlets. *Second dress*: Purple robe, embroidered with large fleur-de-lys, and edged with ermine, small jewelled crown.

CONSTANCE.—White silk open dress, short full sleeves trimmed with blue ribbon, small round curls and ringlets.

LADIES.—Handsome short waisted double dresses.

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